Al Maghrib Institute

EmanRush

Touched by an Angel

Tafseer Juz 'Amma
Audio Companion Notebook

Instructor:
Muhammad Alshareef

Notes and summaries to accompany the audio presentation of the first **Double-weekend-ACCREDITED-seminar** given by AlMaghrib Institute solely dedicated to the explanation of Part 30 of the Qur'an.

Contents

Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Ever-Merciful, the Completely Merciful

> Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; the Ever-Merciful, the Completely Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgement. You Alone do we worship, and Your Aid we seek. Show us the Straight Way; the way of those on whom You have given Your Grace, those whose por?tion is not wrath, and who do not go astray. Ameen.

We were all created for the same purpose, yet our journeys are never the same. The paths we choose make our existences unique, and create a clear divergence in our ways.

When we've chosen the path of righteousness and have the sincere intention to serve Allah, there are preparations for our journey that we must make. Surely, depending on our level of preparation and provisions from which we survive, the way can be easy. For ease and clarity, we must follow the directions and guidance of Allah, which comes from the Sunnah of His Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).and the Magnificent, Noble Quran.

To this end, with the Mercy and Favor of Allah, Br. Muhammad Alshareef, Founder and Director of *Al Maghrib* Institute, has created a means by which we may come closer to the path of righteousness and have a clearer understanding of Allah's Plan, Messages and Guidance for us. In conjunction with *EmanRush Audio*, *Al Maghrib* Institute has produced "Touched by an Angel"- a set of sixteen audio compact discs that contain an in-depth tafseer (explanation) of the last thirtieth part of the Holy Quran. This notebook is a companion to the audio presentation, intended to assist the user in grasping, maintaining and benefiting from the material covered in "Touched by an Angel".

It is our hope that, through this effort, those people who have a desire to worship and please Allah (swt) receive guidance, sincere admonition and practical applications of the/Al-Quran for their daily lives. For having knowledge of Quran creates ease on the path of righteousness – the straight way of those who are favored.

Usage Guide

This notebook is an aid to help the user easily contemplate and digest the points and explanations provided in the audio compact discs. Ideally, the user should listen to the "Touched by an Angel" compact discs while reading and following the points in the notebook. If this cannot be done, every effort should be made to review the notebook after the compact disc is completed,.

There are quizzes, extension exercises and special points to note throughout the work. The user should complete and take note of these to interact with the text and connect with its meanings. There is also a final test, which may be submitted to the Student Assistant, of Al Maghrib for review and grading, inshaAllah.

Proper usage of the notebook will dramatically increase the user's experience inshaAllah. Please take note of the following suggestions to achieve maximum benefit inshaAllah.

Tips for the serious student:

- Listen to the audio compact discs and make notes in the *Personal Reflections* section of each surah as you are listening. Writing these and reviewing them later will encourage the student to recognize how well they have connected with the material.

- Make a note of questions that you have about the material. These can be posed for responses by Muhammad Alshareef on the AlMaghrib Forums. http://forums.almaghrib.org

- Refer to the binder everyday. Part of the purpose of this summary it to allow the student a great deal of flexibility in study through various methods of learning and maximum retention.

Suratul 'Alaq a.k.a. Iqra'

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ
1. Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists),

خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ
2. Has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood).

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ
3. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous,

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ
4. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen [the first person to write was Prophet Idrees (Enoch)],

عَلَّمَ الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ
5. Has taught man that which he knew not.

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَيَطْغَى
6. Nay! Verily, man does transgress all bounds (in disbelief and evil deed, etc.).

أَن رَّآهُ اسْتَغْنَى
7. Because he considers himself self-sufficient.

إِنَّ إِلَى رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَى
8. Surely! Unto your Lord is the return.

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يَنْهَى
9. Have you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) seen him (i.e. Abu Jahl) who prevents,

عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّى
10. A slave (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) when he prays?

أَرَأَيْتَ إِن كَانَ عَلَى الْهُدَى
11. Tell me, if he (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) is on the guidance (of Allah)?

أَوْ أَمَرَ بِالتَّقْوَى
12. Or enjoins piety?

أَرَأَيْتَ إِن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى
13. Tell me if he (the disbeliever, Abu Jahl) denies (the truth, i.e. this Qur'an), and turns away?

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى
14. Knows he not that Allah does see (what he does)?

كَلَّا لَئِن لَّمْ يَنتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ
15. Nay! If he (Abu Jahl) ceases not, We will catch him by the forelock,

نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ
16. A lying, sinful forelock!

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَه
17. Then, let him call upon his council (of helpers),

سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَة
18. We will call the guards of Hell (to deal with him)!

كَلَّا لَا تُطِعْهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ
19. Nay! (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)! Do not obey him (Abu Jahl). Fall prostrate and draw near to Allah!

↵ The Backdrop

In his quest for spiritual fulfillment, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) became increasingly thirsty for solitude and solace. Consequently, he would leave his home, sometimes for months, taking refuge in the cave of Hiraa'. There he sought to elevate both his body and soul.

It was during one visit to the cave of Hiraa' that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) received, through the Angel Jibreel (عليه سلم) the first revelation of the Quran. Thus, he became responsible for conveying this message to all of humanity.

☑ Word-for-Word

اقْرَأْ Iqra (verse 1) - read (as a commandment)
عَلَقٍ 'Alaq (verse 2) - clot; something that clings (i.e. fetus)
كَلَّا Kallaa! (verse 6, 15) – firm, stern way of saying "no"
لَيَطْغَى from Tughyaan (verse 6) - tyranny; compared to filled vessel which overflows
اسْتَغْن Istaghnaa (verse 7) - independent; no longer dependent
أَرَأَيْتَ Ara'ayta (verse 9) – have you seen; calls for interaction

لَنَسْفَعًا lanasfa'an (verse 15) – to grab with extreme harshness
نَاصِيَةٍ Naasiyah (verse 16) – front portion of the head, "intelligence center"
خَاطِئَةٍ Khaati'ah (verse 16) - something done on purpose, with knowledge
نَادِيَه Naadiyah (verse 17) call (e.g. to call for the help of friends)
الزَّبَانِيَة Az-Zabaaniyah (verse 18) – those that push with extreme harshness; gate keepers of hellfire

€ Notable Points

The first revelation
READ!

There is a great significance in the first word revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Allah is commanding us to seek knowledge.

One of the ways in which Allah honors the human being, is by affirming that He is their Creator. He also tells of the beginning of our existence as small, coagulated blood. Although He is the Creator of everything, this shows the nobility of human creation.

Two ways we gain knowledge:
1) The pen – information we gather from reading;
2) Divine instruction ("that which he knew not") – information that Allah gives us that we would not know otherwise.

The disbelievers at the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) knew everything about him. They knew that he could not read and that he was an honest and trustworthy man. Yet, because of their tyranny, they continually doubted the source of the Revelation and made the following claims about it:
1) That a devil inspired the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم);
2) That someone from another country taught him (e.g. Greece);
3) It was due to some form of magic.

Allah refutes all of these claims by saying:

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَـذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ

"And indeed We know that they (polytheists and pagans) say: "It is only a human being who teaches him (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)." The tongue of the man they refer to is foreign, while this (the Qur'an) is a clear Arabic tongue." (An-Nahl verse 103)

"This is a clear Arabic tongue in which the Quran was revealed".

Intoxicating power of wealth

The human being will transgress and become tyrannical when they feel they have no need of others.

When Abu Jahl came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and asked that Allah turn the mountains into gold, verse six was revealed. In this verse, Allah confirms that if the mountains were turned into gold, then Abu Jahl would become tryrannical and filled with arrogance unlike his claim that he would worship Allah.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to make dua not to have excessive wealth (for fear of tyranny) or debilitating poverty. He wanted just enough.

Allah warns of the negative consequences that come from thinking that one is self-sufficient.

The story of he who forbids worship

Even though prominent people (e.g. Abu Jahl) knew that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was truthful and correct, they still refused to leave their idols. This was partly due to the financial profitability of promoting idol-worship in pre-Prophetic Mecca. The profits from these earnings were used to inhibit the worship of Allah.

Abu Jahl even attempted to stop the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) from praying. Allah speaks of this shockingly arrogant effort. He (سبحانه و تعالى) asks us to envision it and imagine the audacity of this action, especially since Allah is surely ever-watching.

Beware!

For the tyrants, Allah warns that if they do not desist then they will be dealt with severely. He dares the conscious wrongdoers (e.g. Abu Jahl) to call for the help of others to assist them and protect against Allah's punishment.

Continue on your path - unhindered

For the righteous, the last verse ends with a commandment not to obey the transgressors. They should continue with work and worship and draw closer to Allah.

Gems to Remember

- There is no evidence to support saying "Sadaq Allahul 'Atheem" (Allah speaks the truth) after the Quran is recited.

- Not all of the Quran was revealed continuously.

- We should not become preoccupied with only the scientific miracles of the Quran such that the purpose is lost - it is foremost a book of guidance.

- This surah begins with knowledge and ends with worship – the two should always be coupled.

✍Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul 'Alaq

1. The root of the Arabic word for "teach", "knowledge" and "pen" are the same. Explain how teaching, seeking knowledge and using the pen might help one draw closer to Allah as prescribed in verse 19 of Suratul 'Alaq.

2. Allah gives us some examples of things that man can/does do to "transgress all bounds", and/or be considered evil; list these trangressions and the corresponding verse numbers.

3. What is the significance of the forelock? Why do you suppose Allah chooses to isolate this part of the body for punishing the wrongdoer (e.g. Abu Jahl)?

Suratul Lahab a.k.a Masad a.k.a. Tabbat

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ
1. Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab (an uncle of the Prophet) and perish he!

مَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ
2. His wealth and his children (etc.) will not benefit him!

سَيَصْلَى نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ
3. He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames!

وَامْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ
4. And his wife, too, who carries wood (thorns of Sadan which she used to put on the way of the Prophet or use to slander him).

فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ
5. In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad (palm fibre).

The Backdrop

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was given the message of Islam and was commanded to call his people to the religion. He obeyed and called the people according to their tribes. When they gathered, they came hurriedly knowing that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was truthful and must not be ignored.

Then, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) reminded his people of who he was and asked them if they would believe him if he warned them against evil. They admitted to never having experienced nor heard a lie from him and therefore would indeed believe him. He gave them the message of warning, warning of a great punishment.

Abu Lahab, who was a very rich and well-regarded citizen of Makkah, responded to the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) message by saying, "May you perish, you gathered us only to say this!" He then walked away, and all of the people followed him.

Suratul Lahab was then revealed. After the message of this surah spread among the people, the children would taunt the cock-eyed Mother of the Beautiful, who was married to Abu Lahab - the Father of the Fire. The children would use poetry to tease this couple about their curse from Allah, which has been preserved through the ages.

Who's Who

Abu Lahab (Father of fire):	'Adbul 'Uzza ibn Abdul-Muttalib
His wife:	Al Awraa' (cock-eyed) Umm Jameel (lit. mother of the beautiful) bint Harb

Word-for-Word

تَبَّتْ Tabbat (verse 1) - destruction, to lose absolutely everything

Notable Points

Cursed are those who oppose the Truth

None of Abu Lahab's wealth, children or accumulated possessions will benefit him. He will lose everything. He is cursed, and Allah then confirms that the curse has come into fruition (he has already been destroyed).

Abu Lahab is defamed in the Quran, by the Lord of the Worlds. Therefore, losing his honor, position, and status, all of which are referred to as aghnaa (wealth) by Allah.

In addition, Abu Lahab boasted that he would ransom himself from punishment. He expected to be able to use his wealth and status to release him from the grip of Allah's Anger. However, Allah confirms that nothing will benefit him. He will in fact be burned in the fire – the blazing flames.

Why was his wife mentioned as the one who carries wood?
Al'Awraa would put thorns in the path of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to annoy and harm him. In another sense, she may be referred to "as the one who carries wood" because she used to spread rumors and inflammatory statements among the people. She carried the "wood" of ill-will, igniting the fire of hatred between friends, relations and loved ones.

She also had a necklace that was very expensive and costly. She pawned the necklace and swore by her false gods the she would use it to harm the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his companions. Allah has replaced this necklace with one from the hellfire.

From Ummul Jameel's example we see that no matter what a person gives (as she gave the money from the sale of her necklace to hurt Islam), and for whatever reasons, they will be

recompensed for it – either from the Hellfire or from Paradise. Her "necklace" in the hellfire will increase her in humiliation.

When Ummul Jameel heard the children tauntingly reciting this surah, she became angry and stormed into the area where the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was sitting. However she could only see Abu Bakr and not Rasulullah. There she stood with a huge rock, ready to harm the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and once again she was humiliated: her eyes could not see what was so obvious to everyone else.

Al'Awraa tried to repair her wounded ego by cursing the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) She referred to him as "Mudhammam, the belittled one, instead of "Muhammad" the praised one. Just like the rock she held in her hands, her curse was also never to harm the dear one (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Allah protected him. In fact, he said in effect, "My name is not Mudhamman, they are cursing Mudhamman." Allah diverted their curses from him and protected his name.

From the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) example, we see that the Muslim strives to exhibit mercy in all situations, even against his own enemies. Unlike the disbelieving people, a Muslim does not evoke the curse of Allah on a whim. In our dua (invocation) against the evil people, we should recognize that Allah the Almighty can predict the end of a person. He knows what will become of the one who is harming us, so one should say "May Allah bring his Islam quickly or his punishment quickly." We do not wish harm for the one that Allah does not wish harm and we do not wish good for the one whom Allah does not wish well.

Gems to Remember

- To prove the Quran incorrect, all Abu Lahab had to do was say "I am Muslim" because Allah said he is in the hellfire. He had it in his hands to disprove the Qur'an, it could have been easy for him to say these words, but Allah knows the end of everyone.

- In the Quran, Allah will often refer to something that will happen in the (our) future, as if it is in the present....his knowledge is all-encompassing (سبحانه و تعالى). Allah knows best.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Lahab

1. Explain how each of the following points relate to Suratul Lahab, and indicate which of them is the ultimate lesson that one should learn from this surah:

   Point 1: Cruelty ultimately ruins itself

   Point 2: Nothing will profit the person who does wrong toward those whom Allah has favored

   Point 3: The people you are associated with can give you long-lasting joy or permanent ill-repute.

2. Allah often uses symbolic words, phrases and concepts that have an appropriate connotation, while at the same they will also have a connection to real-life events that happened in the past. Explain how this is done in Suratul Lahab regarding Abu Lahab and his wife.

3. When Abu Lahab snubbed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) after he called his people toward the truth he said, "Perish you!". Allah tells us in verse 1, that Abu Lahab himself is perished, and all that he gained in this life will not avail him. What lesson can we learn from this about curses and the words we use?

Suratul Takweer

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ
1. When the sun Kuwwirat (is wound round and has lost its light and is overthrown).

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انكَدَرَتْ
2. And when the stars shall fall;

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ
3. And when the mountains shall made to pass away;

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ
4. And when the pregnant she-camels shall be neglected;

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ
5. And when the wild beasts shall be gathered together;

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ
6. And when the seas shall become as blazing Fire or shall overflow;

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ
7. And when the souls shall be joined with their bodies;

وَإِذَا الْمَوْؤُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ
8. And when the female (infant) buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do) shall be questioned.

بِأَيِّ ذَنبٍ قُتِلَتْ
9. For what sin she was killed?

وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ
10. And when the written pages of deeds (good and bad) of every person shall be laid open;

وَإِذَا السَّمَاء كُشِطَتْ
11. And when the heaven shall be stripped off and taken away from its place;

وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ
12. And when Hell-fire shall be kindled to fierce ablaze.

وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ
13. And when Paradise shall be brought near,

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ
14. (Then) every person will know what he has brought (of good and evil).

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالْخُنَّسِ
15. So verily, I swear by the planets that recede (i.e. disappear during the day and appear during the night).

الْجَوَارِ الْكُنَّسِ
16 And by the planets that move swiftly and hide themselves,

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ
17. And by the night as it departs;

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ
18. And by the dawn as it brightens;

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ
19. Verily, this is the Word (this Qur'an brought by) a most honorable messenger [Jibreel (Gabriel), from Allah to the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم].

ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِندَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ
20 Owner of power, and high rank with (Allah) the Lord of the Throne,

مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ
21. Obeyed (by the angels), trustworthy there (in the heavens).

وَمَا صَاحِبُكُم بِمَجْنُونٍ
22. And (O people) your companion (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) is not a madman;

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ بِالْأُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ
23. And indeed he (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) saw him [Jibreel (Gabriel)] in the clear horizon (towards the east).

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ
24. And he (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) withholds not knowledge of the unseen.

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ
25. And it (the Qur'an) is not the word of the outcast Shaytan (Satan).

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ
26. Then where are you going?

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

27. Verily, this (the Qur'an) is no less than a Reminder to (all) the 'Aalameen (mankind and jinns).

لِمَن شَاء مِنكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ

28. To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight,

وَمَا تَشَاؤُونَ إِلَّا أَن يَشَاء اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

29. And you will not, unless (it be) that Allah wills, the Lord of the 'Aaameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists).

The Backdrop

The following descriptions are included in the statement of Ubayy ibn Ka'b, regarding the six signs that will appear before the Resurrection. These events will happen (and Allah knows best) one after the other.

1) The light of the sun will be lost
2) The stars will fall
3) The mountains will crumble into the seas
4) The earth will tremble causing all living creatures (e.g. jinns, humans, wild beasts) to run wild and mix with each other
5) The jinn will go to spread the news, and as they reach the sea they will find it to be a pool of fire. The earth will burst open, all the way to its core as they are witnessing this
6) The wind will come and take all of their lives

A common custom of the Arabs during and before the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was to bury female children alive or allow them to live and treat them in a disgraceful manner. These females were often killed because the father saw them as a liability since they would not be expected to contribute or bring a "return on their investment". Also, women were often the main cause for dishonor being brought upon the family. These are among the reasons why it was considered a very serious fault and risk to have daughters.

Who's Who

Angel Jibreel:	The chief of among the angels, historically responsible for conveying the messages of Allah to the Prophets. He is immensely powerful, of high and noble status as well as trustworthy (of the highest trust). He is obeyed by the other angels.

Shaytan Ar Rajeem: A jinn named Iblees who was in the heavens (in the company of Angels) at the time of Adam's (عليه سلم) creation. He refused to obey Allah's command to bow to Adam and was cast from heaven and doomed for all of eternity. He asked Allah to grant him permission to leave and show that human beings (Adam and his descendants) would be ungrateful.

☑ Word-for-Word

Apocalypse – the destruction of the world as we know it. The salvation of the righteous and the destruction of evil; essentially events that will end "time", not meant to reference the ideas that are prevalent in other religious traditions regarding these events.

كُوِّرَتْ Kuwwirat (verse 1) – to wrap into itself

إِذَا Idha –(verse 1)translated throughout the surah as "when", but actually means "if" in most cases. The reason it's translated as 'when' is because there is no doubt the event will happen.

انكَدَرَتْ Inkadarat (verse 2) – fallen stars

الْعِشَارُ 'Ishar (verse 4) – the most expensive and sought after camel of the Arabs

النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَت An-Nufusu Zuwwijat (verse 7) – the souls will be grouped together (i.e. good with good, evil with evil)

كُشِطَتْ Kushitat (verse 11) – ripped off, as a roof is ripped from a house during a tornado

سُعِّرَتْ Su'irat (verse 12) – ignited again and again

أُزْلِفَتْ Uzlifat (verse 13) – coming closer

خُنَّس Khunnas (verse 15) – something that goes back

عَسْعَسَ 'As'as (verse 17) – the night covers, moving along in the darkness

تَنَفَّسَ Tanaffas (verse 18) – when the morning breathes

قَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيم Qawlu Rasulil Kareem (verse 19) – referring to the qualities of the Angel Jibreel

مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ Mutaa'in Thamma (verse 21) – he (Angel Jibreel) is obeyed there

صَاحِبُكُم Saahibukum (verse 22) – your friend, your companion

قَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ Qawli Shaitanir Rajeem – it (Quran) is not the words of the Shaitan

€Notable Points

The word "idha" is used throughout this surah as "when" but the word actually means "if". The muffasir (scholars who interpret the Quran) understood that there can be no "if" regarding these statements because they are a reality that will surely happen. Hence, the affirming "when" is used instead. Also, when the word "if" is used (even in English) there is always a "then" or something that will happened based on the condition. The if/then

pattern is maintained in this surah. He tells of all the things that will come to pass during the Apocalypse, and follows this with “then every person will know what he has brought”.

In order to send a message to people, Allah uses those things, which are familiar to them. He makes the message very clear by using metaphors and similes to illustrate and describe important points. For example, the use of mountains as a point of reflection is very key in this surah because these were very common parts of the Makkan landscape. Likewise, the occurrence of camels and female infanticide would have been concepts easily understood at the time of the Prophet. Yet, many generations and lifestyles later, we can still relate to the points raised in this surah because while things have changed, they are still oddly the same.

When Allah swears by something (i.e. pen, sun, planets), it raises its status. Often Allah will say “I do not testify” which makes the affirmation stronger. One of the meanings is that this issue being testified about is so absolutely clear that it does not even need to be testified to.

The Reality of the End of Time

The sun will be enveloped and the light will be snuffed out. The stars will fall and the mountains will be blown away and turned into dust.

The camel which is just about to give birth will be neglected. A pregnant she-camel (for the Arabs at the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) especially) would be very valuable, because the wealth of her delivery would soon come into fruition Even for us, something or someone that is heavily pregnant is fawned over and attended to a great deal. This surah informs us that such affairs of this world will mean nothing once these events of the Apocalypse begin.

Creatures will run wild, the seas will become a blazing fire and people will be gathered with others who lived such as they did (i.e. the pious with the pious).

The female babies who were killed unjustly (e.g. buried alive) will be questioned about their sins. Allah states that this questioning will occur along with other monumental events at the end of time. Consequently infanticide is considered to be a very grave sin,

The pages of good and bad deeds will be opened and heaven will be stripped from its place. The hellfire will ignite from within itself again and again. The Paradise will be drawn near to accept its inhabitants.

Every soul is responsible

Once these events have occurred, the person will have no doubt about their predicament.

Prophethood and divine revelation

The planets recede in the sense that they disappear during the day and appear again in the night. They move and hide themselves. The night also comes and goes and the dawn shines and appears brightening all of the surroundings.

The words herein are conveyed by a messenger of high rank in the sight of Allah (Angel Jibreel). The Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) saw the Angel Jibreel in the horizon, yet he is not a madman. The words that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) conveyed are not the utterances or messages of the rejected Shaitan.

The people who want to walk on the straight path can only do so if they are guided, and the Quran is a reminder.

Gems to Remember

- Do not be like a sponge, which absorbs every doubt. Be like a person looking out of a window at people walking in the rain (so there is a barrier between you and the information), make yourself safe from the harmful effects of the doubt, as you would shelter yourself from the rain. The conviction we have for the morning, moon and stars should be the same for the things which Allah tells us of and testifies by.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Takweer

1. Identify how Suratul Takweer confirms the following statement. Dissect it and include the verses that support each part:

   "*The divinely inspired Qur'an is just one of the many signs of Allah. If we seriously reflect on His creations and take responsibility for our ownselves, we will find the guidance of Allah apparent (if He wills) and prepare for the final day.* "

2. Which of the following statements might accurately suggest why Allah describes the traits of the Angel Jibreel (عليه سلم):

   a. To simply let us know of his position with Allah
   b. To further dispel the lie that the Quran was not divinely inspired
   c. To show the position of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), our "companion" with Allah, since he saw Jibril (عليه سلم) and was actually visited and touched by him (عليه سلم).

3. Some of the "landmarks of life" are mentioned in this surah. What are they and what will happen to them, or how will they be, and/or what will they do on the Day of Judgement?

Suratul A'laa a.k.a. Sabbih

سَبِّحِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى
1. Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High,

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى
2. Who has created (everything), and then proportioned it;

وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى
3. And Who has measured (preordainments for each and everything even to be blessed or wretched); then guided (i.e. showed mankind the right as well as wrong paths, and guided the animals to pasture);

وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَى
4. And Who brings out the pasturage,

فَجَعَلَهُ غُثَاء أَحْوَى
5. And then makes it dark stubble.

سَنُقْرِؤُكَ فَلَا تَنسَى
6. We shall make you to recite (the Qur'an), so you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) shall not forget (it),

إِلَّا مَا شَاء اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَى
7. Except what Allah, may will, He knows what is apparent and what is hidden.

وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَى
8. And We shall make easy for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) the easy way (i.e. the doing of righteous deeds).

فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى
9. Therefore remind (men) in case the reminder profits (them).

سَيَذَّكَّرُ مَن يَخْشَى
10. The reminder will be received by him who fears (Allah),

وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى
11. But it will be avoided by the wretched,

الَّذِي يَصْلَى النَّارَ الْكُبْرَى
12. Who will enter the great Fire and made to taste its burning,

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى

13. Wherein he will neither die (to be in rest) nor live (a good living).

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّى

14. Indeed whosoever purifies himself (by avoiding polytheism and accepting Islamic Monotheism) shall achieve success,

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى

15. And remembers (glorifies) the Name of his Lord (worships none but Allah), and prays (five compulsory prayers and Nawaafil additional prayers).

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا

16. Nay, you prefer the life of this world;

وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

17. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى

18. Verily! This is in the former Scriptures,

صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى

19. The Scriptures of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Musa (Moses).

The Backdrop

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) loved this surah. According to many of the companions he would recite it in the Witr (last prayer of the night), on the days of 'Eid (bi-annual celebrations) and in Salatul Jumu'ah (Friday Prayer).

Perhaps this surah was amongst the favorites of Allah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) because it contains three important messages of Islam. These messages are Tawheed, (the Oneness of Allah and belief in it), the Revelation of the Quran and other beneficial reminders for the people.

Who's Who

Ibrahim (عليه سلم): Known as the father of monotheism. He was a Prophet and Messenger. Allah revealed the Suhuf (scrolls) to him for dissemination of His commandments to the people.

Musa (عليه سلم): A Prophet and Messenger, sent to the Children of Israel. Allah revealed the Tawraat (Torah) to him to make clear His laws and commandments.

☑ Word-for-Word

سَبِّح Sabbih (verse 1) – the commandment to say "How far is Allah from imperfection"
غُثَاء Ghuthaa' (verse 5)- the dark, bubbly foam on water
إِلَّا مَا شَاء اللَّهُ Ilaa MaaSha'Allah (verse 7) – except that which Allah wishes to abrogate or cancel
لِلْيُسْرَى Al-Yusraa (verse 8) – the easiest way of life among the divinely inspired religions
فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى Fa dhakkir Innafa'atidh dhikra (verse 9) – we learn from this that the one who spreads knowledge should be conscious of what will benefit or profit the listener.
وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى Wa yatajannabuhal ashqaa (verse 11) – people actions will follow what is in their hearts
النَّارَ الْكُبْرَى An Naral Kubraa (verse 12) – the fire of hell is the biggest, greatest whereas the fire we now is nar sughra (small).
ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ Thumma laa yamoot (verse 13) - not dead nor alive
قَدْ أَفْلَحَ Qad Aflaha (verse 14) - he who cleansed his heart with Iman.
بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ Bal tu'thiroona (verse 16) – we prefer what we see now (the life of this world)

€Notable Points

Exalted be Allah!

The word choice used here tells us that it is a commandment from Allah to glorify his name and hold him far above the imperfections that are ascribed to him. Allah has honored us by instructing us to say "Subhana Rabbil Alaa": My Lord is Exalted above all imperfections. He honors us by commanding us to refer to Himself as our Lord.

Cross reference:
Israa verse 44

وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلاَّ يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدَهِ وَلَـكِن لاَّ تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا

"And there is not a thing but glorifies His praise(free Him from all kinds of defects and faults)."

There is not a single thing that does not glorify Allah, even though we may not recognize its manner of praising Him.

Man has been placed in a superior position above the animals because of our intellect. However, in one sense, the animals are superior to us since they do exactly what they were created to do. Whereas, we often do not do this. A dog, pig or any of the animals considered most defiled, may actually be more beloved in the sight of Allah than the human who uses his intellect to worship someone or thing other than Allah..

The One who measured, the One who gave guidance and the One who brings out the harvest. What we plant will only come to life and grow by the will of Allah.

The Religion is a Mercy

Allah promised the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that He would have the Quran recited to him such that he would not forget. Only that which Allah wills is forgotten. Allah knows what is shown as well as what is concealed. The fact that the Quran is preserved is a miracle in itself. Because the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was illiterate, and could not write and review the revelation that he was given, yet it has been preserved for us just as Allah said it would.

Allah will make easy for us the easy way. He wants ease for us (and for that we should be thankful).

Who will take heed?

Allah tells us to remind people who need a reminder, in case it will benefit them. However, he informs us that the one who fears (Him) will receive it and the one who is wretched will not. Allah gives us a tip for spreading the message of Islam. Give the reminder to the ones who will benefit from it. In fact, if you ever speak to people using words that their minds cannot comprehend it will be a fitnah (stressful) for them.

Those who do not heed the reminders will enter the Fire, and it is great. They will not die in the fire, nor live.

Cross Reference:
Faatir verse 36

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُم مِّنْ عَذَابِهَا

Those who disbelieve, their place will be the hellfire. Their lives will not end nor will they die, and the punishment will not end or nor lighten.

Many things will come to the people of hellfire that would have killed them in the former life. Their food, the poisonous gases that they will breathe, the heavy objects that will descend on them are all so great that they should die (death comes to them from every direction), but they will not die.

Who will be victorious?

The one who purifies himself from worshipping other than Allah, recognizes and remembers his Lord, prays and obeys Allah - will achieve success. It has already happened, they are successful.

Following the way of Allah and His commandments is the easy way. The hardship is in the sin and its punishment. Allah does not wish hardship on us, but He wants us to be thankful so that our end will be easy (e.g. Jannah, and the rewards that He has prepared for the righteous). He even shows us the way to please him and avoid his wrath.

While people prefer to "look on the bright side of things" Allah presents both sides - the punishment and the reward. He gives us hope but warns of the consequences of disbelief. Allah almost always appeals to the feelings of fear and hope.

But no, people prefer the life of this world despite the fact that the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

This was in the books that were revealed in past times, in the scriptures of Ibrahim and Musa .

Gems to Remember

- For those who think that it is an insult to Islam to say that many of the same messages are found in the teachings of Judaism and Christianity are incorrect since Allah confirms here that indeed this is the same message given to everyone. It is all from the same source: Allah!

- In one sense the hearts of people are like rocks. If you grind them they may crumble and turn to dust and rubbish, or they may shine brilliantly and become more precious and beautiful. Likewise if people are put under stress and tested with trials they may be devastated and their hearts destroyed. While others put under the same stress may come out stronger and more dedicated than before. Their hearts will shine like diamonds.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul A'laa

1. We will all reach the end that is best fitted for our natures. Extract (and properly label with the verse number) what Allah says will happen at the "End" for people (both good and bad).

2. What is true success and prosperity, as explained in this and other chapters of the Quran?

3. Since we generally understand that there have been five books of guidance sent to mankind, why do you suppose only two are referred to in verse 19? Why isn't the book revealed to Jesus (Injeel/Gospel) mentioned?

Extension Exercise - 1

THE ABROGATED VERSES

In Suratul A'laa verses 6-8, Allah promises not to allow the message of the Quran to be forgotten, except what he wills to be forgotten, and He also promises to make the simple path easy for us. Many believe that these verses relate to the abrogations in the Quran.

Regading abrogations, the enemies of Islam will often try to cite the fact that there are some verses in the Quran that obviously do not correspond with the laws of Islam as we know them, yet we are instructed to follow the Quran in its entirety. It is therefore important to know these verses and understand how to explain the occurrence of them.

To Do:

Find the abrogated verses. Use the following table (or design your own) to present them with the accepted explanations regarding them:

Table of the Abrogated Verses of Quran

Verse & Sura number	Translation of the verse	What the Muffasiroon (interpreters of Quran) have stated about the verse	Fiqh conclusions and general concensus regarding the verse (and the issues related to it)

Note: The table above is a sample. The number of rows in the table do not necessarily reflect the number of abrogated verses.

Suratul Layl

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى
1. By the night as it envelops;

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى
2. And by the day as it appears in brightness;

وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى
3. And by Him Who created male and female;

إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّى
4. Certainly, your efforts and deeds are diverse (different in aims and purposes);

فَأَمَّا مَن أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى
5. As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him,

وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى
6. And believes in Al-husnaa.

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى
7. We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness).

وَأَمَّا مَن بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى
8. But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient.

وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى
9. And gives the lie to al-husna;

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى
10. We will make smooth for him the path for evil;

وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى
11. And what will his wealth benefit him when he goes down (in destruction).

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَى
12. Truly! Ours it is (to give) guidance,

وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَى
13. And truly, unto Us (belong) the last (Hereafter) and the first (this world).

فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى

14. Therefore I have warned you of a Fire blazing fiercely (Hell);

لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى

15. None shall enter it save the most wretched,

الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى

16. Who denies and turns away.

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى

17. And muttaqoon (the pious and righteous) will be far removed from it (Hell).

الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى

18. He who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification,

وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِندَهُ مِن نِّعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى

19. And have in his mind no favour from anyone for which a reward is expected in return,

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاء وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى

20. Except only the desire to seek the Countenance of his Lord, the Most High;

وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى

21. He surely will be pleased (when he will enter Paradise).

The Backdrop

In Makkah when this surah was revealed, slaves who accepted Islam were being tortured because they had chosen the Straight Path. Having neither protection nor family left them exposed to abuse and mistreatment. The slaves and other poor Muslims would be publicly humiliated and beaten on the streets of Makkah for all to witness. The aim of the kuffaar (disbelevers) was to dissuade anyone from accepting the message of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). The Muslims themselves at this time were largely powerless and could not save them. They were powerless chattel that had no recourse for salvation, except the Help of Allah.

The soft-hearted and kind Abu Bakr would free the slaves that he saw being tortured. His father found out about his acts of generosity and advised him to free the strongest of slaves, rather than the old women and young children. His father's interest was to create a group of people who would be strong enough to repay Abu Bakr should he ever need assistance and help. Abu Bakr responded by informing his father that he performed these acts in order

to gain the most reward. The freeing of the weakest people would inshaAllah get him the greatest reward from Allah.

Many of the respected interpreters of Qur'an say that this surah makes reference to the purchase and subsequent release of Bilal, the slave who later became the Muaddhin (caller to prayer) for the Prophet's Masjid. Rumors began to spread regarding the intentions of Abu Bakr when he freed him. This surah would squelch those, and absolve Abu Bakr from such suspicion.

☑ Word-for-Word

يَغْشَى Yaghshaa (verse 1)- to cover, as a shawl would cover someone's head in the cold
وَمَا خَلَقَ Wa ma khalaqa (verse 3)- the one who created male and female, it is Allah the Lord of the Universe, the one who creates
صَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى Saddaqa bil Husna (verse 6) – to believe and have no doubt in a day when he or she will meet Allah. Both the belief and the action must be present.
لِلْيُسْرَى Al Yusraa (verse 7) – easy, smooth; such will be the way of the righteous toward good.
وَاسْتَغْنَى Wastaghnaa (verse 8) – someone who does not need forgiveness or reward
كَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى Kaddhaba bil Husna (verse 9) – to reject the notion of the Hereafter
وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى Wa ma yughnee 'anhu maaluhu idha taraddaa (verse 11) – and wealth will not aid the one who is to be punished
تَرَدَّى Taradda (verse 11) - destruction
يَتَزَكَّى Yatazakkaa (verse 18) – to purify
سَوْفَ يَرْضَى Sowfa Yarda (verse 21) – Allah will give him rewards such that he is satisfied and pleased

€Notable Points

Humans take different paths in life

Not everyone will live the same way, make the same choices, or choose the same path.

Allah swears by the night as it envelopes (the light), by the day as it pierces (the darkness) and by the One who created the male and female, that the efforts and deeds of humans are diverse.

To swear by something is to intensify the validity of the statement that is to follow. The Arabs would do this, and Allah does this in Suratul Layl. Whenever there is a qasam (testification) there must be a reply. If Allah swears by something then He makes the statement that follows it (or the implied and understood meaning) clearly important.

Allah swears by opposite creations that are from the same source but are distinctly different (i.e. male and female). Likewise, while humans are from the same source and have the same creator, we are often opposites and our paths diverge and go in distinctly different directions.

Allah will often swear by celestial objects, things that are clearly beyond human control. For the one who reflects this is a powerful message in and of itself – the One who controls the sun and moon says that such and such will happen - and so it shall be. Who or what else could be so certain?

Which path is beloved to Allah

In His mercy, Allah then explains to us which of the paths He loves.
Those who give of their wealth (for the sake of Allah), and believe in the goodness with no doubt that they will meet and return to Allah. Righteousness is made easy for these people.

Which path does Allah despise?

For the person who is greedy, stingy and thinks that he has no need for Allah (i.e. never asks for forgiveness) and he lies to himself about the meeting with Him, the path to evil is made easy.

> Hadith Reference:
>
> 'Ali reported that one day Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) was sitting with a wood in his hand and he was scratching the ground. He raised his head and said: There is not one amongst you who has not been allotted his seat in Paradise or Hell. They said: Allah's Messenger, then why should we perform good deeds, why not depend upon our destiny? Thereupon he said. No, do perform good deeds, for everyone is facilitated in that for which he has been created.Then he recited this verse: *"Then, who gives to the needy and guards against evil and accepts the excellent (the truth of Islam and the path of righteousness it prescribes), We shall make easy for him the easy end..."* (92:5-10) (Muslim).

A human does not know what is written for him. Yet, we have been given continual warnings and admonishments that should help us check ourselves. When we read these verses we should immediately be convinced and/or encouraged to pursue the path that Allah favors. There should be no surprises, the end has been foretold.

The destruction of he who thinks only wealth can save him

Allah asks how a person's wealth will benefit them when they fall down into destruction.

Philanthropy is only worthy of Allah's reward if it is done for His sake.

He then confirms, "Truly, upon us, we will guide them."

Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) does not leave us without guidance. He showed us the path, sent us the Messengers, revealed the Divine Books and gave us a mind to distinguish from right and wrong.

The world belongs to Allah, it is a test. The hereafter also belongs to Him - He warns us of the punishment therein. The blazing fire is for the most wretched who deny the truth and turn away.

Surah Kahf, verse 29:

قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاء اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا

Musa (Moses) said: "If Allah will, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in aught."

The salvation of the believer that uses his or her wealth for the sake of Allah

The person who is "Allah-conscious" will be removed from the punishment of Hell. The person who spends his wealth to purify himself, and who does so only hoping for the opportunity to see Allah's face and not to be paid back in this world – he (the pious servant) will ultimately be pleased.

Hadith Reference:

The people said, "O Allah's Apostle! Shall we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?" He replied, "Do you have any doubt in seeing the full moon on a clear (not cloudy) night?" They replied, "No, O Allah's Apostle!" He said, "Do you have any doubt in seeing the sun when there are no clouds?" They replied in the negative. He said, "You will see Allah (your Lord) in the same way. On the Day of Resurrection, people will be gathered and He will order the people to follow what they used to worship. So some of them will follow the sun, some will follow the moon, and some will follow other deities; and only this nation (Muslims) will be left with its hypocrites. Allah will come to them and say, 'I am Your Lord.' They will say, 'We shall stay in this place till our Lord comes to us and when our Lord will come, we will recognize Him. Then Allah will come to them again and say, 'I am your Lord.' They will say, 'You are our Lord.' Allah will call them, and As-Siraat (a bridge) will be laid across Hell and I (Muhammad – sal Allahu alayhi wa sallam) shall be the first amongst the Apostles to cross it with my followers. Nobody except the Apostles will then be able to speak and they will be saying then, 'O Allah! Save us. O Allah Save us.' (Bukhari)

Gems to Remember

- Those who say the world is a result of coincidence must recognize the billions of miracles that we take for granted everyday. This could never all be a coincidence.

- When we want to do good deeds and extra acts of worship, Allah will make things easy for us and allow us to taste the sweetness of our efforts, and then some.

- Hellfire is like a waterslide, if you let go and just "live" in the dunya, it will be easy to do actions worthy of the Hellfire. However, Jannah is like a mountain, you must struggle and work hard to always be on alert as you traverse. InshaAllah after such a journey, a person will be worthy of Allah's pleasant reward and saved from punishment.

- In the Arabic language, each word has a root (which has the literal and true meaning) and the words we often see, use and converse with are the derivatives. The derivatives carry the meaning of the root, despite the addition of other letters and forms. For instance, the word 'zakat" is from a root that means "purify".

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Layl

1. Identify one universal truth in this surah that encapsulates the human condition.

2. Allah invokes the remembrance of opposites with the Night, the Day, the Male and the Female as mentioned in verses 1-3. What other opposites are highlighted in this surah?

3. To say that someone has "tunnel vision" is generally considered a negative comment. It seems that Allah is encouraging this (single-mindedness) in Suratul Layl. Cite the verse and explain.

Exercise Extension – 2

MY GOALS, MY INTENTIONS

It is time for self-relection. Get to a quiet space, clear your mind and summon all of your energy toward honestly analyzing your deepest, inner-most thoughts.

Self-Reflection

Answer the following questions in the spaces below original. Modify your answer to reflect the traits of those who are most devoted to Allah, as told to us in Suratul Layl verses 17-21. Try to change what your outlook and perspective is on the following if they are not in keeping with these verses – meaning if they are not done, or aspired toward getting closer to Allah and His reward.

Original:
The three most important things to me are:

Modification:

Original:
If I were asked where and who I want to be ten years from now, I would answer:

Modification:

Original:
In the last week, I've sacrificed my wealth and/or to _____________ for someone else, I did it because I wanted _______________.

Modification:
Next week I intend to sacrifice my wealth and/or time to ________________, and I will expect nothing in return except the favor of Allah.

Original:
Tomorrow, I plan to do the following:
Write ALL of the things you think you may do tomorrow from the morning until the evening. Be honest, and include EVERYTHING.

Modification:

Suratul Fajr

وَالْفَجْرِ
1. By the dawn;

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ
2. By the ten nights (i.e. the first ten days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah),

وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ
3. And by the even and the odd (of all the creations of Allah).

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ
4. And by the night when it departs.

هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ
5. There is indeed in them (the above oaths) sufficient proofs for men of understanding (and that, they should avoid all kinds of sins and disbeliefs, etc.)!

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ
6. Did you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) not see (thought) how your Lord dealt with 'Aad (people)?

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ
7. Who were very tall like lofty pillars,

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ
8. The like of which were not created in the land?

وَثَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ
9. And (with) Thamud (people), who cut (hewed) out rocks in the valley (to make dwellings)?

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ
10. And (with) Fir'aun (Pharaoh), who had pegs (who used to torture men by binding them to pegs)?

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ
11. Who did transgress beyond bounds in the lands (in the disobedience of Allah).

فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ
12. And made therein much mischief.

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ

13. So your Lord poured on them different kinds of severe torment.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ

14. Verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful (over them).

فَأَمَّا الْإِنسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ

15. As for man, when his Lord tries him by giving him honor and gifts, then he says (puffed up): "My Lord has honored me."

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَانَنِ

16. But when He tries him, by straitening his means of life, he says: "My Lord has humiliated me!"

كَلَّا بَل لَّا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ

17. Nay! But you treat not the orphans with kindness and generosity (i.e. you neither treat them well, nor give them their exact right of inheritance)!

وَلَا تَحَاضُّونَ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ

18. And urge not on the feeding of Al-Miskeen (the poor)!

وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا

19. And you devour inheritance all with greed,

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا

20. And you love wealth with much love!

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا

21. Nay! When the earth is ground to powder,

وَجَاء رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

22. And your Lord comes with the angels in rows,

وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرَى

23. And Hell will be brought near that Day. On that Day will man remember, but how will that remembrance (then) avail him?

يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي

24. He will say: "Alas! Would that I had sent forth (good deeds) for (this) my life!"

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُ أَحَدٌ

25. So on that Day, none will punish as He will punish.

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ
26. And none will bind as He will bind.

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ
27. (It will be said to the pious): "O (you) the one in (complete) rest and satisfaction!

ارْجِعِي إِلَى رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً
28. "Come back to your Lord, Well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing unto Him!

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي
29. "Enter you, then, among My honoured slaves,

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي
30. "And enter you My Paradise!"

Who's Who

Aad: A tribe of people who built high landmarks, and castles in the mountains to show off. They believed that they would live forever. They behaved brutally and did mischief by being extravagant and loving dominance. These people were enormous, strong and very powerful, unlike any others created. They are believed to have lived near present-day Jordan.

Iram : Literally means tall, like pillars. Could also refer to a particular person from the tribe of 'Aad, with a grand, tall, stature.

Fir'aun- Evil, despotic ruler of ancient Egypt, who thought that he was a god. He and most of his followers rejected the truth that was brought to them by the Prophet Moses (عليه سلم). He would torture those who believed in the way of Allah, even his wife Aasiya. He and his army were drowned in the Red Sea as they pursued the Children of Israel.

☑ Word-for-Word

لَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ Layaalin 'Ashr (verse 2) – ten nights, most of the interpreters of the Quran say this refers to the ten days of Dhul Hijjah, could also be the ten nights of Ramadhan.
يَسْرِ Yasr (verse 4) – to walk in the night,
لِّذِي حِجْرٍ Lidhee Hijr (verse 5) – boycott, could also refer to an intelligent person, who because of his intellect, does not sin

ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ Dhil Owtaad (verse 10) – Firaun's "stakes" were men who used to torture people, they were like the stakes that one drives into the ground to secure a tent. Firaun's men would forcefully push people into submission, just as the pegs of a tent are thrust into the ground. Some people say that the pegs referred to here were huge structures built (i.e. pyramids)

فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ Aktharoo feehalFasaad (verse 12) - tyranny, murder, sin – all vices. Those who commit them, deserve punishment and destruction

لَبِالْمِرْصَاد Labil Mirsaad (verse 14) – like a stalking, peering watch, waiting in ambush.

ابْتَلَاه Ibtalaah (verse 15) – tests, hardships

كَلَّا Kallaa (verse 17) – an emphatic negation. No, no, no NEVER! It is used to warn intensely so as to prohibit a grave mistake.

لَّا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ Laa tukrimoonal yateem (verse 17) – doing what is worse (i.e. disgracing the orphans).

لَا تَحَاضُّونَ Laa Taahaddoona (verse 18) – to be stingy in speech

التُّرَاثَ Al Turaath (verse 19) – inheritance

دَكًّا دَكًّا Dakkan Dakkaa (verse 21) – pounding repeatedly, one after the other

جَاء رَبُّكَ Jaa Rabbuka (verse 22) – judge between creation

وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ Jee'ah yawma'idhin bi Jahannam (verse 23) – Jahannam will be brought to its inhabitants

وَثَاقَهُ Wathaaqahu (verse 26) – the punished one will be tied up in a swallowing pit, with no escape

النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ Al Nafsul Mutma'innah (verse 27) – he has prepared with it what it needs to be safe on this day

€Notable Points

What happened to the tyrants?

One of the key characteristics of Makkan surahs is Allah's swearing by something. This raises the status of the thing being sworn by (raising its status in Islam), intensifies the statement being made and shows its importance. The "maqsoom alaih" is dropped in verse five, intensifying the anticipation for the next verse (e.g. Allah punishes the tyrants for their actions (verse 6).

Allah testifies that he will destroy people for their tyranny. He swears by the even and odd of creation, by the ten nights (of Dhul Hijjah) and by the dawn.
Some interpreters of Quran refer to the ten nights of Dhul Hijjah, while others say that this refers to the last ten nights of Ramadhan.

Humanity shall be tested

When Allah tried man, by giving him honor and good things, he says "My Lord has honored me". However, when he tried him by constricting (reducing) his sustenance, he says "My Lord has humiliated me."

Allah will constrict the provision of people who are wrongdoers, and at that point they will feel as if they are dishonored. Whereas when their wealth is abundant and free flowing they proclaim this as an accomplishment of theirs (e.g. "My Lord has honored me", "I've been blessed")

The nobility for the transgressors (in their opinion) is based on his wealth, whereas the nobility of the true believer is in his worship of Allah and obedience (such as it should be for all people).

Yet, at the same time he does not treat the orphans with kindness and is not generous with them, neither does he urge his fellow man toward feeding the poor. He greedily takes from the inheritance of the weak and he loves wealth tremendously.

Horrors and Happiness of the Hereafter

The earth will be ground into powder, and your Lord comes with angels in rows, Hell will be brought near and people will remember then (the commandments of Allah), but the remembrance will not avail them. It will be too late.

The person will say "I wish that I had sent forth good deeds for this life!" On that day none will punish as Allah will punish, and none will bind as he will bind.
People will remember all of the mistakes that they made. How will it benefit them to reflect then?

The life that Allah is speaking of here is the real life. For those who have not prepared for it, there will be no safety.

> Cross Reference:
> Suratul Ankaboot verse 64
>
> وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ
>
> "And this life of the world is only amusement and play! Verily, the home of the Hereafter, that is the life indeed (i.e. the eternal life that will never end), if they but knew."

Yet, to the pious it will be said, "O (you) the one in rest and satisfaction, come back to your Lord well-pleased (they themselves) and well-pleasing (unto Allah)! Enter and be amongst my most honored slaves, and enter into My Paradise!"

These are the people who have prepared what they need to be safe on the Day of Judgment.

Gems to Remember

While listening to the recitation of Makkan surahs, one will find that Allah uses rhythmic tones that change with the themes of the surah. This was very unlike Arabic poetry, which consisted mainly of monotone rhythms.

Allah created everything in evens (pairs). There is something like or similar to every single creation in the universe. There is nothing odd, or unique except Allah. There is nothing like unto him (Bukhaari)

Allah will often destroy the transgressors with the simplest of his creations (e.g. Firaun with water, the People of the Elephant with small pebbles). Allah shows the powerlessness of these people through their destruction by things we see everyday.

The actions of people when major hardships and tests come show the manner in which they have dealt with the small day-to-day tests and how well they are prepared and dedicated to Allah.

Many people will consider their wealth being taken away as a test, not realizing that having the wealth is also a test.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Fajr

1. One obvious negative trait of humans is that they put too much value on worldly goods. Allah warns us of this, and we should take note of the manner in which He would like us to behave in times of good fortune. Based on verse 15, how do you suppose we should react when Allah gives us honor and material gains?

2. Based on verse 16, how do you suppose Allah would prefer us to react when we find that our sustenance is decreased?

3. Explain and support with proof, the following statement:

   "Allah's punishment of the arrogant, transgressive people is a form of justice."

Suratul Duha

وَالضُّحَى
1. By the forenoon (after sunrise);

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَى
2. And by the night when it is still (or darkens);

مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَى
3. Your Lord (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) has neither forsaken you nor hated you.

وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَى
4. And indeed the Hereafter is better for you than the present (life of this world).

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَى
5. And verily, your Lord will give you (all good) so that you shall be well-pleased.

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَى
6. Did He not find you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) an orphan and gave you a refuge?

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَى
7. And He found you unaware (of the Qur'an, its legal laws, and Prophethood, etc.) and guided you?

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَى
8. And He found you poor, and made you rich (selfsufficient with selfcontentment, etc.)?

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ
9. Therefore, treat not the orphan with oppression,

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ
10. And repulse not the beggar;

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ
11. And proclaim the Grace of your Lord (i.e. the Prophethood and all other Graces).

⮠ The Backdrop

This surah was revealed at a time when the revelation of Quran to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) had temporarily ceased. Once the wife of Abu Lahab realized this, she came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said "I hope your devil has left you." Others made the point that perhaps Allah was angry with him and had abandoned him, such that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was relieved and happy once the revelation resumed with Suratul Duha and Suratul Inshiraah.

☑ Word-for-Word

الضُّحَى Ad- Duha (verse 1) – forenoon
سَجَى Sajaa (verse 2) - resting
قَلَى Qalaa (verse 3) – to hate something
وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَى Wala sawfa yu'teeka rubbuka fa tardaa (verse 5) – He will give great things until you are pleased
يَتِيمًا Yateeman (verse 6) – someone who has not reached the age of puberty whose father has died
ضَالًّا Daallan (verse 7) – unaware, (i.e. not knowing the laws of Islam)
فَأَغْنَى Fa'aghnaa (verse 8) – to make rich
السَّائِلَ As- Saa'il (verse 10) – anyone that asks of people for their necessities

€Notable Points

Allah has not abandoned the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

By the forenoon and by the night when it darkens -Your Lord (O Muhammad) has not forsaken you, and neither does he hate you.

Allah swears by the forenoon, as it is a blessed time. He also swears by the night, as it comes to rest (or stands still). Each of these signs from Allah cannot be denied by anyone, as they are witnessed everyday. Through the use of these, Allah makes known the gravity and profundity of the following statement, "Your Lord has neither forsaken you nor hates you".

Do not be concerned with this world

The Hereafter is better than the present world in which you live. Your Lord will give you (from the good) until you are satisfied.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) wanted some assurance for us as his ummah. He invoked Allah on our behalf. Some of the interpreters of Quran say that verse five refers to this request of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Every Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was given one prayer that they could ask of Allah

and it be answered. He was so attached to us, and concerned for us, that he saved his duaa for the Day of Judgement, such that he can intercede for all of the Muslims who died without associating partners with Allah.

To illustrate the profound love that our Prophet had for us, compare it to the statement that Allah says the Prophet Eesa (عليه سلم) will make on the Day of Judgement about his ummah (People of the Gospel) in Suratul Maaidah verse 118:

> إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ
>
> *"If You should punish them – indeed they are Your servants, but if You forgive them - indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise."*

The Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was given many distinct blessings:

On Earth-
The conquest of Makkah
Nobility, despite his seemingly ignoble background
Establishment as the last Prophet for mankind
Victory over all of the lands

In the Hereafter-
The religion he was sent to convey is above other religions
He will intercede for his ummah on the Day of Resurrection
The highest status of any human being in the Hereafter
The fountain of Kawthar
He is the leader of all Prophets

Remember Your Roots

Allah reminds the Prophet from whence he came. He was an orphan, and Allah gave him refuge. He was unaware and Allah guided him. He was poor and Allah made him rich. Regarding his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) being rich, it is important to note that while the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) had access to much wealth, he would give it away. He believed that Allah was enough and did not fear poverty. He was therefore self-sufficient and content.

Three tokens of advice

Allah commands us not to oppress the orphans, or turn away the person who asks and speak of His blessings.

With the blessings of Allah comes the responsibility of action. Good character can not be "lip-service". Allah has told us since over 1400 years ago how to have good character. He teaches us how to be good to one another and worship Him.

Gems to Remember

- The character of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was the Quran. Allah groomed him and taught him etiquette.

- This surah shows that Allah (swt) really loved His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) this shows us the necessity to follow the way of the Prophet in order to please Allah

- Ask any mother which child she loves the most, she will reply that it is the one who is sick until he becomes healthy, and the one who is traveling until he returns.

- The next time you see a beggar on the street, make every effort to give. Perhaps your quarter may stop them from stealing or committing evil to get money. Even if you feel the person does not need it, at least they are not mugging someone to get what they want. Never, under any circumstances, insult a beggar or turn away haughtily.

- Praise of Allah should always accompany praises of ourselves and others.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Duha

1. Ad-Duha "the glorious morning light" means so much to those who reflect. What might it have meant or signified to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) when he listened to this surah for the first time? What does Ad-Duha represent in your life?

2. Allah commands certain actions in this surah, what are they? Explain the importance of these commandments in the life of a Muslim.

3. Analyze this surah, and identify the ways in which Allah reassures the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) of His having not forsaken him.

Suratul Inshiraah a.k.a. Ash-Sharh

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ
1. Have We not opened your breast for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)?

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ
2. And removed from you your burden,

الَّذِي أَنقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ
3. Which weighed down your back?

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ
4. And raised high your fame?

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا
5. So verily, with the hardship, there is relief,

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا
6. Verily, with the hardship, there is relief (i.e. there is one hardship with two reliefs, so one hardship cannot overcome two reliefs).

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ
7. So when you have finished (from your occupation), then stand up for Allah's worship (i.e. stand up for prayer).

وَإِلَى رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ
8. And to your Lord (Alone) turn (all your intentions and hopes and) your invocations.

The Backdrop

The Muslims were being tremendously tried through persecution and torment by the non-believers of Makkah. Some of the seemingly helpless Muslims beseeched the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to pray for relief, and he would chastise them and encourage them to be patient. These verses were revealed as the Muslims were suffering because of their low status in society and impoverished state.

☑ Word-for-Word

نَشْرَحْ Nashrah (verse 1)- we expanded (i.e. opened so that it would accept the truth)
أنقضَ Anqada (verse 3) – something heavy weighing down
مَعَ الْ Ma'al (verse 5) – with the (e.g. showing that ease comes with the hardship (it's just that close)
فَانصَبْ Fansab (root of nasb) (verse 7) - tiredness literally - but here means to stand up and work hard in your worship

€Notable Points

Lofty position of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

Allah begins this surah with "Didn't We" or "Have We not", this raises the remembrance and causes the listener to answer in the affirmative and become thankful.

There are three blessings for the Prophet mentioned in this surah that should be noted:
1) Allah expanded his chest with the light of guidance (could also refer to the literal opening of the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) chest by the angel Jibreel (عليه سلم)
2) Allah removed the heavy burden from his back
3) His remembrance is raised amongst the people

Patience, O servants of Allah

Truly with hardship is an ease, Indeed with hardship is ease.
In the wording of these verses 5 and 6 we find that both times the hardship "Al Usr" is definite, referring to the same, specific one. Yet the "Yusra" is not definite, it can come in many forms, not the same one necessarily. No hardship will ever overcome the ease that is sent by Allah. This could also mean that there will be one ease immediately (e.g. on Earth) and then another that will come later (e.g. the Hereafter). No hardship will come except happiness comes before and happiness after, and each happiness is different.

Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) does not promise us that the ease and relief will come after the hardship. Rather we can rest assured that when our problems begin, the solution accompanies them.

Train your souls

When you have finished (what occupies you), devote yourself to the worship of Allah. And to only Your Lord direct your hopes, intentions and longings.
Our object of devotion should be Allah (سبحانه و تعالى), no desire that we have in the material world should be stronger than our hope, fear and love for our Lord.

Gems to Remember

- No other human on earth has ever been followed in speech (Tajweed), action (Sunnah) or deed like the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

- Do not get so occupied with dawah and work for the community, that you are too tired to worship Allah

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Inshiraah

1. Explain how this Surah might be considered a continuation of Suratul Duha?

2. Islam is a balanced way of life. There are two main themes in Suratul Inshiraah that illustrate this balance, identify them.

3. How would you use an explanation of Suratul Inshiraah to encourage a person who is experiencing severe trails and test.

Suratul 'Asr

وَالْعَصْرِ
1. By Al-'Asr (the time).

إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ
2. Verily! Man is in loss,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ
3. Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous, good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'roof which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad, etc.).

☑ Word-for-Word

الْعَصْرِ al 'Asr (verse 1) – time
وَتَوَاصَوْا Watawaasaw (verse 2) – to help one another; encourage with advice and guidance

€Notable Points

If we only had this surah, the enormity of it is such that we could lead successful lives as Muslims by contemplating and acting on it alone. Suratul 'Asr would be sufficient for us.

The default

By the time! Humans are losers by default.

When Allah testifies by something it shows that there are many blessings that can come from that thing (e.g. time), and it also reminds of the precision of Allah's creation and the enormity of the act of creation.

People are enslaved to their sins, desires and wrongdoings. They live their lives going from one sin to the other. The Muslim is the slave of Allah, and this is the greatest nobility that one can have.

The recipe for success

The only ones who are successful are those who take proactive measures to avoid that state of loss by having faith, doing good deeds (abstaining from evil) and encourage each other toward truth and patience.

There are three types of patience:

a. Patience in obedience to Allah (Taa'ah)
b. Patience in not disobeying Allah ('an Ma'siyah)
c. Patience with Allah's decrees and things over which we have no control (Qadaa')

Islam is a social religion. Not only should we do what is proper, but we must also encourage others to do so. We are encouraged not to sleep, travel, or continually remain, alone. This may open the door to diminishment of piety (fear of Allah), as there is no other Muslim there to enjoin toward the good.

Iman is something that resides in the heart, but is proven by the actions. The intentions must be good, but so must the actions.

Cross Reference
Aal Imran verse 196 - 197

لاَ يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فِي الْبِلاَدِ

"Let not the free disposal (and affluence) of the disbelievers throughout the land deceive you."

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ

"A brief enjoyment; then, their ultimate abode is Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest."

Gems to Remember

- We do not earn Jannah, we can only gain it through the embrace of Allah's Mercy. We hope that our actions are accepted by Allah so that we will benefit from them and have the reward. When we sin, there is no harm to Allah, likewise when we do good, it is only for ourselves.

The way of the Muslim is to encourage others toward the good (through words and deeds), and not hold back the religion or cut themselves off from people.

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Asr

1. The commonly known statement “time never rests” shows the never-ending nature of this convention, given to us by the mercy of Allah. Imagine a world without time – share your reflections.

2. Social welfare and civic responsibility are actions encouraged by Allah in many places in the Quran. Explain how doing good and encouraging others to do the same could (literally) keep humanity from being lost. What if everyone were like the person described in verse 3?

3. A wise man once said “Waste not, nor misuse your life”. An unwise man said, “How do I make the best use of my life?”

   What answer would you give to him?

Suratul 'Aadiyaat

وَالْعَادِيَاتِ ضَبْحًا
1. By the (steeds) that run, with panting (breath),

فَالْمُورِيَاتِ قَدْحًا
2. Striking sparks of fire (by their hooves),

فَالْمُغِيرَاتِ صُبْحًا
3. And scouring to the raid at dawn

فَأَثَرْنَ بِهِ نَقْعًا
4. And raise the dust in clouds the while,

فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا
5. Penetrating forthwith as one into the midst (of the foe);

إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ
6. Verily! Man (disbeliever) is ungrateful to his Lord;

وَإِنَّهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ
7. And to that fact he bears witness (by his deeds);

وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ
8. And verily, he is violent in the love of wealth.

أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ
9. Knows he not that when the contents of the graves are brought out and poured forth (all mankind is resurrected).

وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ
10. And that which is in the breasts (of men) shall be made known.

إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌ
11. Verily, that Day (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) their Lord will be Well-Acquainted with them (as to their deeds), (and will reward them for their deeds).

↵ The Backdrop

The culture of the pre-Prophetic Arabs was such that they would identify with themes of war and combat. This surah is set in an air of intensity and horror, beginning with the image of war horses charging.

☑ Word-for-Word

الْعَادِيَاتِ Al 'Aadiyat (verse 1) – charging war horses
ضَبْحً Dabha (verse 1) – the panting and vicious breathing
قَدْحًا Qadha (verse 2) the stomping on the ground that creates sparks of fire
الْمُورِيَاتِ Al Mugheeraat (verse 3) – roots is Ighaarah, which is to raid (e.g. the war stallions that raid)
صُبْحً Subhaa (verse 3) – morning, this is when the fighters would traditionally attack
لَكَنُودٌ Kanood (verse 6)– simply ungrateful (i.e. one who remembers the hard times and forgets all the blessings that he could never complete counting
حُبِّ الْخَيْرِ Hubb al Khair (verse 8) – literally to love goodness, but here it may mean money
بُعْثِرَ Bu'thira (verse 9) – to dump and flip upside down
حُصِّلَ Hussila (verse 10) – made known, exposed for all to see

€Notable Points

An oath by the steeds of war, that humans are ungrateful

Allah swears by the racers (horses) panting, and the producers of sparks as their hooves strike the ground, and the charging horses that raise the dust clouds as they collectively arrive in the center (of the enemy's position) – indeed humans are ungrateful to their Lord.

The status of horses are raised in Islam, especially those that are used in war for the sake of Allah. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said that the horse has goodness wrapped in its reigns until the Day of Judgment (Bukhari and Muslim).

Ungratefulness coupled with vehement love for money

Man is very intense in his love of wealth, his deeds and actions are evidence of this.

> We should understand that we cannot just pick up the Quran and use a direct translation without knowledge of the tafsir (or accepted interpretations) rendered by the scholars of Islam. An example of the danger of the contrary can be seen in verse 7, if one were to translate "khair" as good. Rather the accepted meaning in this

context is wealth. We must study, raise our level of understanding and then speak on the religion.

Take warning, for the day shall come

Doesn't man realize that when the contents of the graves are poured out, and everything that is concealed will be revealed – that will be the day that their Lord will be well-acquainted with them?

This "buthira" or dumping out will be as if a suitcase is being opened and turned upside down such that all of the contents are scattered. Wherever there are bodies (e.g. in the sea) they will be uncovered.

"Hussila" in this context means torn open, made known as one would imagine an orange being peeled. Once the covering is removed, the entire thing is exposed.

Gems to Remember

- During the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) they would wait in the morning out the outskirts of a village to hear the call to Fajr (dawn) prayer. If they did not hear it, they would initiate an attack on that city. How would it be if the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the Sahabah were waiting outside your door with horses, bows and arrows ready to strike at Fajr?

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul 'Aadiyat

1. The horses referred to in Suratul 'Adiyat have particular characteristics, and actions that make them praiseworthy. Identify these.

2. Which of the following two statements do you think would best describe what verse 4 typifies: "And raise the dust in clouds all the while?" Explain and support your selection.

    a. The horses storm into the ranks of the enemy, raising dust in their faces as they charge.

    b. The clouds figuratively represent the clouds of confusion and ignorance that abound in the minds of those who oppose the truth.

3. In many places in Quran, including verse 8 in Suratul 'Aadiyat, Allah couples the love of wealth with wrongdoing and transgression. How would you explain the harmfulness of greed to someone who loves and wants all the best that they can acquire in life?

Suratul Kawthar

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

1. Verily We have granted you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) al-Kawthar (a river in Paradise).

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ

2. Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice (to Him only).

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

3. For he who makes you angry (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) he will be cut off (from every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter).

The Backdrop

None of the males born to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) lived. They all died either shortly after birth, or as very young children. For the average person of his time, this would be a source of shame and disgrace. A man named Al-Aas ibn Waa'il mocked the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) because of this, reminding him that is lineage would be cut off, and no one would carry his name, heritage of lineage.

☑ Word-for-Word

الْكَوْثَرَ Al-Kawthar (verse 1) – abundance, also known to refer to the river in Paradise that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) has been given by Allah

€Notable Points

This is the shortest surah in the Qur'an, however the meaning has filled many volumes of tafsir.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is not cut off

Verily, We have given you Al-Kawthar. So pray to your Lord and make your sacrifices to Him only.

No one likes to be remembered for the evil that they've done. What may be worse is the one who expects to be remembered but whose legacy is obliterated. Such is the "one who is cut off": Allah does not even mention his name here.

Allah uses "Inna" (We) to show his greatness, which is more intense in meaning than if He had used "Ana" (I). He is the great giver, who has given a great gift.

> The gift that Allah is referring to is a "cash" gift, meaning it has already been given. It is not something that may or may not happen in the future. It is already done. Although time and tense are all the same to Allah, it intensifies the meaning for the reader to say it in the past.

Indeed your enemies are the ones cut off.

Verse 2 shows us that we have to sacrifice for the sake of Allah with our bodies and our wealth. Both worship and charity are acts of worship if intended for Allah's sake and hoping for His reward.

Gems to Remember

- When we work for the sake of Allah, we must be prepared to be hurt and go through trials and criticism from the people. We should not preoccupy ourselves with the problems brought on by people.

- When spreading the message of Islam, do not become engrossed in the refutations. Also, do not attack opposing personalities, attack the issue, so that once the personality is gone, your refutation of the issue will still stand.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Kawthar

1. Verse 2 in Suratul Kawthar for some interpreters of Qur'an represents the ritual sacrifice of meat (i.e. Aqueeqah). Explain, as you would to a non-Muslim what the purpose of this is. Afterall, Allah does say, "It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah…"

2. Allah advises the dutiful servant to react to negativity and hardship continually. Which of these three statements is usually mentioned with this advice? Explain your answer and also explain why you did not choose the remaining statements.

    a. Give zakat so that your troubles will go away
    b. Turn in worship to Allah
    c. Don't complain and have patience

3. In verse 3 of Suratul Kawthar, Allah promises that the detractors and insultors of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) will be cut off. In what sense is this meant? Explain.

Suratul Takaathur

أَلْـهَاكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ
1. The mutual rivalry for piling up of worldly things diverts you,

حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ
2. Until you visit the graves (i.e. till you die).

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
3. Nay! You shall come to know!

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
4. Again, Nay! You shall come to know!

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ
5. Nay! If you knew with a sure knowledge (the end result of piling up, you would not have occupied yourselves in worldly things)

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ
6. Verily, You shall see the blazing Fire (Hell)!

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّـهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ
7. And again, you shall see it with certainty of sight!

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ
8. Then, on that Day, you shall be asked about the delight (you indulged in, in this world)!

☑ Word-for-Word

لْـهو Lahu (verse 1) - distraction
التَّكَاثُرُ Takaathur (verse 1) – rivalry in the accumulation of material things, showing off.
سَوْفَ Sawfa (verse 4) – indicates something that will happen in the future
لَوْ Law (verse 5) – "if" as in if you contemplated, if you knew and understood
النَّعِيم An-Na'eem (verse 8) – means here the delights of this world (i.e. meals, drinks, car rides, pillows), can sometimes be a place where a desire is fulfilled

€Notable Points

Humans are distracted from the truth

You are distracted with collecting the things of this world, until you visit the graves (i.e. die).

> There are many euphemisms for death, perhaps because people would rather avoid using the word itself, and try to soften the blow of it by using kinder, gentler phrases. Allah uses a play on words such as this by saying "visiting the graves", although it is much more serious and profound. It is a visit with no return.
>
> This surah is a warning to those who are preoccupied with trying to get more wealth and offspring, those who are blinded by the rat race.
>
> Hadith Reference:
>
> Narrated Sahl bin Sa'd:
> I heard Ibn Az-Zubair who was on the pulpit at Mecca, delivering a sermon, saying, "O men! The Prophet used to say, "If the son of Adam were given a valley full of gold, he would love to have a second one; and if he were given the second one, he would love to have a third, for nothing fills the belly of Adam's son except dust. And Allah forgives he who repents to Him." Ubai said, "We considered this as a saying from the Qur'an till the Surah (beginning with) 'The mutual rivalry for piling up of worldly things diverts you...' (102.1) was revealed."

The graves and Hellfire

It will happen that you will come to know, you will come to know. If you knew with a sure knowledge (what the end is for those who become preoccupied with the wealth of this world) that you will see hellfire, and surely you shall see it with certainty of sight.

> Everyone will become a Believer, either in this life or the next. We will all come to realize and know for sure that the promises of Allah are true (both the punishments and rewards).
> The repetition in verses 3 and 4 are not for emphasis. Rather the first refers to the reality of death and the knowledge of ones end once the soul is being extracted. The second refers to the Day of Judgment and the realization of what will happen on that Day.
>
> Verse 5 encourages reflection and contemplation. Allah is saying if you knew with certain knowledge the end result of being preoccupied with worldly things ... then what would change in your life?

Accountability for every indulgence

Then, on that Day you shall be questioned about the delights of this world in which you indulged.

We will be questioned (reminded) about all of our blessings, no matter how small (i.e. pillows, cars etc.)

Gems to Remember

- Do not become comfortable with the notion that everyone is sinning, the whole world is transgressing. Each and every person will be responsible for their own actions. We will live in the grave alone, will be resurrected and held accountable - alone.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Takaathur

1. Does verse 8 of Suratal Takaathur indicate that we should minimize our enjoyment in life so that we will have less to account for in the hereafter? Are all indulgences equal in the sight of Allah? Explain your answer.

2. From what you've studied of the Tafsir so far, what would you say are the most important things to focus on before death approaches? What are the "more serious things"? List practical and/or tangible things, not abstract or broad concepts.

3. Is Allah speaking to all of humanity in Surat Takaathur verse 6, or is He only addressing those people who are occupied with piling up material things? Review Surat Maryam, verse 71 before explaining your answer.

Extension Exercise – 3

Everything that is true is certain to some degree. As humans however, we may not understand or perceive truth when it is shown, told or presented to us. Generally according to human perception there are three degrees of certainty arrived at through our faculties.

Answer the following questions about this topic:

1. There are two Surahs in Qur'an that explicity state concepts of certainty. Find them through whatever means (i.e. Tafsir books, Qur'an concordance, word search of electronic database, etc), and cite the related verses.

2. What are the three degrees of certainty? Name them in English and give their Arabic equivalents (names).

3. How does one obtain each degree?

4. Which of these is the ultimate degree of certainty?

5. Briefly write your thoughts and comments regarding these degrees of certainty, and name at least one concept or truth that you are certain of to each degree.

Suratul Maa'oon

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ

1. Have you seen him who denies the Recompense?

فَذَٰلِكَ الَّذِي يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيمَ

2. That is he who repulses the orphan (harshly),

وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ

3. And urges not the feeding of AlMiskin (the poor),

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ

4. So woe unto those performers of Salat (prayers) (hypocrites),

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

5. Who delay their Salat (prayer) from their stated fixed times,

الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ

6. Those who do good deeds only to be seen (of men),

وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ

7. And refuse Al-Ma'un (small kindnesses e.g. salt, sugar, water, etc.).

The Backdrop

One possible reason why this surah may have been revealed:

When Al-'Aas ibn Wa'il once slaughtered two camels for a walimah (wedding reception), he was approached by an orphan begging for food. His response to the request was to beat the boy with a stick. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said the most evil of walimahs is the one in which the people who are invited do not want to come and those who should be invited (because they need and want to come) are repulsed.

☑ Word-for-Word

أَرَأَيْتَ Ara'ayta (verse 1) – meaning "Can you imagine?"
الْمَاعُونَ Al-Maa'oon (verse 7) – small kindnesses that would cause no harm or decrease to share
يَدُعّ Yadu' (verse 2) – push aggresively

الْمِسْكِين Al-Miskeen (verse 3) – poor, someone clinging to the dust
فَوَيْل Wayl (verse 4) – destruction, calamity, punishment
سَاهُون Saahoon (verse 5) – could refer to being busy chasing desires such that the duty to Allah (Salat) is neglected. It normally means to be 'mistaken', but because this 'mistake' was done purposefully, the one who committed it is blameworthy.

Notable Points

The disbeliever

Have you seen the one who denies and lies about the repayment? He is the one who repulses the orphan harshly, and does not encourage the feeding of the poor.

> The Quran continually defends those people who have no one to protect them (i.e. widows and orphans). At the time of revelation, people would steal the inheritance of the weak, and compound their wickedness by not feeding them as well.
>
> The characteristics of the Kafir (disbeliever) mentioned here is that they deny Allah's gifts. They do not act justly with Allah or with the people. Since they do not feed the poor from their own means or encourage others to give.

This surah is a very strong warning for those who are stingy, greedy and who do not even share the smallest of things (i.e. salt, water etc.)

The hypocrite

Woe unto those who delay the Salat (prayer) and do good deeds only so that people can see them, and prevent the giving of small kindnesses.

> Allah is warning those who delay their Salat and the hypocrite who only does things to be seen of men, and to show off in their actions.
>
> We should learn the characteristics of those whom Allah warns us about and avoid possessing them at all costs. By Allah's mercy that which pleases and displeases Him is repeatedly made apparent.
>
> Allah has warned those who delay their Salat and show off for the sake of others in worship. If we share even a small portion of these deeds, we also share in the curse.

Gems to Remember

- We know that the Munafiqoon (hypocrites) are people who delay their Salat and make habitual excuses to neglect the private worship of Allah.

- If the hypocrite prays, he does not hope for a reward and if he does not pray, he fears no punishment. He is bound to be cast into the lowest depths of the Hellfire. How grave then will the punishment be for those who do not pray at all?

- The person who shows off (muraree) may still be a believer, but his faith is very weak. As an extension of this, we find in other instances that a person's character is proportional to their belief. If they have bad character, their belief is also questionable and problematic.

✍Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Maa'oon

1. Explain the different possible meanings of "Al-Din" in verse 1 of Suratul Maa'oon?

2. Does verse 5, of Suratul Maa'oon refer only to those people who miss prayers? Why or why not? Support your answer with accepted interpretations.

3. Al Maa'oon is often translated as neighborly needs, while there are other translations such as small kindnesses. Speaking of neighborly needs - a cup of sugar, a pinch of salt, and a garden tool are all things that are normally exchanged by neighbors. Rarely these days do we find neighbors that need such things. Are there other ways that we can give Al-Maa'oon? Give examples.

Suratul Kaafiroon a.k.a. Surah At-Tawheed

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ
1. Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these mushrikun and disbelievers): "O Kafirun (disbelievers in Allah, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Qadar, etc.)!

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ
2. "I worship not that which you worship,

وَلَا أَنتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ
3. "Nor will you worship that which I worship.

وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ
4. "And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping.

وَلَا أَنتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ
5. "Nor will you worship that which I worship.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ
6. "To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islamic Monotheism)."

⮠ The Backdrop

After discovering that their efforts to thwart the message of Islam could not be successful, the Makkans suggested that the Muslims co-worship with them. They asked if the Muslims could follow their path and they would take the responsibility for the sin (acknowledging that the way of the Muslims was correct). They were seeking neutrality and compromise. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) informed the Makkans that they did not have control of distribution of reward and punishment. In fact, when this surah was revealed, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) went before the elite of Makkah and recited this surah.

☑ Word-for-Word

الْكَافِرُونَ Al-Kaafiroon (verse 1) – the ones who deny the favors of their Lord, such as a farmer would hide seeds in the soil

€Notable Points

There is truth, there is falsehood and there is no compromise

Say, O disbelievers, I do not worship what you worship, nor do you worship what I worship. I am not going to worship what you worship, and you are not going to worship what I worship. To you be your path (religion) and to me be mine.

> This surah is an "axe" which is used to divide the truth from falsehood. The Kaafir knows the truth, but hides it. Yet everyone must prostrate to Allah.
>
> Our honor as Believers is to prostrate to Allah. We do not and cannot bow to anyone else. Our servitude is to Allah; in fact we are more than servants to Allah. We are His slaves

There are five categories of rulings in Islam. Any action covered under Shariah (Islamic Law) must fall under one of these.

Five Categories in Islamic Law:

a. Fard/Waajib - obligatory: Allah commands the action. If we do not do it we are susceptible to punishment
b. Mustahabb - encouraged: If we do the action we are rewarded, if we do not, there is no punishment
c. Mubah – permitted: There is no reward or punishment
d. Makrooh - disliked: If we stay away from the action, we will be rewarded
e. Haram - forbidden: We can be punished for doing the action and may be rewarded for desisting

When the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commands staying on the middle course, he is not referring to habitually doing that which is mubah. The middle path can include any of these five categories. If the Quran and Sunnah points to it, then to follow the designation given to the action is to follow the middle path.

Gems to Remember

- This surah is our flag, banner and motto all wrapped into one. It is a part of our honor that we worship the one true god Allah and to say that we will not compromise. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would recite this surah before sleeping so that if he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) were to die he would have disavowed shirk.

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Kaafiroon

1. If faith is a matter of personal conviction, why do we enjoin the good and forbid the evil? Why can't we just leave everyone be?

2. Rarely these days do we see people praying to rocks, but that doesn't mean there aren't idol worshippers amongst us. What are some modern-day objects of worship?

3. There is a key tip for argumentation and debate in this surah, what is it?

Suratul Feel

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ
1. Have you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) not seen how your Lord dealt with the Owners of the Elephant? [The elephant army which came from Yemen under the command of Abrahah Al-Ashram intending to destroy the Ka'bah at Makkah].

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ
2. Did He not make their plot go astray?

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ
3. And sent against them birds, in flocks,

تَرْمِيهِم بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ
4. Striking them with stones of Sijjil

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ
5. And made them like an empty field of stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle).

The Backdrop

Abraha was a king in Yemen who built a gigantic church to compete with the Ka'bah in pilgrims and status. He believed that if a building was an amazing structure, people would come to it. The people did not come in droves as they would to the Ka'bah. One of the Makkans visited the church and defecated inside, provoking Abraha to attack the tribes of Makkah. The largest army the Arabs had ever seen raided them and confiscated animals and property, some of which belonged to the grandfather of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Abdul-Mutallib. It was when he went to retrieve his property from Abraha that he discovered the king's plan to destroy the Ka'bah. He informed Abraha that the Lord of the Ka'bah would protect it against his attack.

The army of Abraha brought with them a huge "tank" of an elephant, which was controlled by Allah such that it could not go near the Ka'bah. Then Allah sent group after group of small birds, each with a tiny pebble in its mouth to deliver a painful, humiliating death to the entire army.

This attack and subsequent destruction of Abraha and his soldiers happened the year the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was born. It is as if Allah was preparing the Makkans for the greater things to come.

☑ Word-for-Word

أَبَابِيلَ Ababeel (verse 3) – groups after groups, waves, battalions
سِجِّيل Sijjeel (verse 4) – hardened clay
كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ Asf Ma'kool (verse 5) – worthless, chewed up and blown away

€Notable Points

Nothing can outmatch the Power of Allah

Have you not considered how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant? Did Allah not make their plot go astray and sent birds in flock after flock to strike them with small stones of hardened clay? Did you not see how Allah made the people like eaten straw (i.e. as if it they had been chewed by cattle).

No one has ever attempted to deny that these events happened. The Arabs could never deny it especially since it is in their collective memory.

One of the signs of Allah is that He places a love and reverence for the Ka'bah in the hearts of people. Everyone wants to see it, touch it and be close to it. Such widespread attention to such a small brick and mortar structure is significant.

Allah uses visual language "Have you not seen". This encourages a deeper reflection and remembrance of the point established.

Allah reminds people of previous punishments delivered to those people of the past who have gone astray. He (subhanahu wa ta'ala) uses the smallest of creations to destroy those who feel as if they are powerful and beyond the reach of anything and anyone.

The people of the elephant were pulverized by these small rocks and tiny birds. They were destroyed as if they were leaves that were eaten, excreted and blown away.

Gems to Remember

- There are many modern day "Abrahas" who are not happy until they divert people from Allah's house.

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Feel

1. What is the key message in this surah, in your opinion? Substantiate your choice with proof from other ayahs, ahadith etc.

    a. To the Makkans: If Allah punishes those people who plan to destroy the Kaba, how much more will he protect his Prophets and servants,
    b. People who are intoxicated with power overestimate their abilities and might before Allah
    c. All evil plans will be foiled

2. In our times we see large nations and super powers plotting against the Muslims and planning tremendous assaults on Believers around the world. How should we react to these? Is there solace to be found in Suratul Feel? Explain.

3. The flocks and flocks of birds carrying tiny, yet deadly stones were nothing short of a miracle. Do we see such miracles today? If not, why do you think they are not apparent to us (or non-existant)? If such miracles do still happen in your opinion, identify examples.

Suratul Falaq

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ
1. Say: "I seek refuge with (Allah) the Lord of the daybreak,

مِن شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ
2. "From the evil of what He has created;

وَمِن شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ
3. "And from the evil of the darkening (night) as it comes with its darkness; (or the moon as it sets or goes away).

وَمِن شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ
4. "And from the evil of the witchcrafts when they blow in the knots,

وَمِن شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ
5. "And from the evil of the envier when he envies."

The Backdrop

The Prophet had a spell put on him by a Jewish magician. It caused him to have a condition similar to impotence. There were eleven knots tied in the rope which was used to place the the spell. The Angel Jibreel informed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) of the reality of his condition and the location of the magic. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) sent Ali (radiallahu anhu) to get the rope. When it was brought, the Prophet recited the eleven ayahs of Suratul Falaq and Naas, and with each one a knot in the rope was untied. As a result, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was relieved of his symptoms.

Hadith Reference:

Narrated 'Aisha:
The Prophet continued for such-and-such period imagining that he has slept (had sexual relations) with his wives, and in fact he did not. One day he said, to me, "O 'Aisha! Allah has instructed me regarding a matter about which I had asked Him. There came to me two men, one of them sat near my feet and the other near my head. The one near my feet, asked the one near my head (pointing at me), 'What is wrong with this man? The latter replied, 'He is under the effect of magic.' The first one asked, 'Who had worked magic on him?' The other replied, 'Lubaid bin Asam.' The first one asked, 'What material (did he use)?' The other replied, 'The skin of the pollen of a male date tree with a comb and the hair stuck to it, kept under a stone in the well of Dharwan.'" Then the Prophet went to that well and said, "This is the same well which was shown to me in the dream. The tops of its date-palm trees look like the heads

of the devils, and its water looks like the Henna infusion." Then the Prophet ordered that those things be taken out. I said, "O Allah's Apostle! Won't you disclose (the magic object)?" The Prophet said, "Allah has cured me and I hate to circulate the evil among the people." 'Aisha added, "(The magician) Lubaid bin Asam was a man from Bani Zuraiq, an ally of the Jews." (Bukhari)

☑ Word-for-Word

الْفَلَق Falaq (verse 1) – daybreak, so clear
شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ Sharri ma khalaq (verse 2) – from the evil of every creation
غَاسِقٍ Ghaasiq (verse 3) – the night at the most intense point of darkness
وَقَبَ Waqab (verse 3) – the night enters with its intense darkness
النَّفَّاثَات An Naffaathaat (verse 4) – to blow without spitting, refers to practitioners of magic (female)
حَسَد Hasad (verse 5) – is to hope that someone's blessings will end

€Notable Points

This surah shows us that anyone (even the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) can be affected by evil. We must continually strive to worship Allah in the best manner, so that we may be protected against the evil of creation in whatever form it may come.

Seek protection from all evil

Allah commands us to say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of the daybreak, and from the evil of that which He created and from the evil of the intense darkness when it enters, and from the evil of those who do magic, and from the evil of the person who has harmful envy when he envies."

The night is generally associated with fright and mystery. People take shelter in their homes from what the night will bring. Only those with a purpose and a reason dare venture out into the night The falaq (daybreak) comes over the night, as if to overcome the evil which may have occurred during the night.

With this revelation, Allah is teaching us how to make dua. We must turn back to Allah for protection. We have no help except what He wills, likewise no one can harm us unless He wills. So we must go to him for both salvation once something happens and protection to avoid evil.

When someone wants to do evil, they usually wait until the night so that their wicked actions may be covered by darkness. However the daybreak will bring to light what the night concealed.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) instructed us to close our doors, gather in the children, and cover the vessels (with food or water) when the night comes.

If we see something good that we like in someone else, then it is permissible to desire this for oneself. However it is not permissible to wish that the goodness is taken from them. This hasad (the destructive jealousy) was present in Iblis against Adam (عليه سلم) and in Adam's sons Habil and Qabil. It is a major sin, which eats good deeds like fire eats wood.

The proper thing to do when you see something good (even in yourself) is to say:

"Allah willed it, and it has happened. May you be blessed in it."

Gems to Remember

A created thing can bring about both evil and good. For example, there is goodness even in the poisonous snakes since their venom can be used to heal illnesses and maladies for which there is no other cure. Likewise an Angel, a creation with so much goodness, may render Allah's punishment, such as those guarding the Hellfire.

When people practice magic, they are punished in this life in the next. In order to gain the effects of their evil intentions, these magicians must "sell their souls away, such that they are tormented and terrorized throughout their lives".

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Falaq

1. Why do you suppose Allah uses the feminine “those” who blow on knots in Suratul Falaq verse 4? Substantiate your points with the opinions of accepted interpreters of Quran.

2. Is there good superstition? Write the literal definition of the word and respond based on it. Then, look for evidence to support your point.

3. Can a Muslim practice “white magic”? Is there a good form of magic that can be practiced by a Believer? Find supportive facts for your argument (from Quran and Sunnah).

Suratul Naas

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاس
1. Say: "I seek refuge with (Allah) the Lord of mankind,

مَلِكِ النَّاس
2. "The King of mankind,

إِلَهِ النَّاس
3. "The Ilah (God) of mankind,

مِن شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاس
4. "From the evil of the whisperer (devil who whispers evil in the hearts of men) who withdraws (from his whispering in one's heart after one remembers Allah),

الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاس
5. "Who whispers in the breasts of mankind,

مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَ النَّاس
6. "Of jinns and men."

☑ Word-for-Word

بِرَبِّ النَّاس Rabbin Naas (verse 1)- the one who created them (Allah), brought them to life from nothing and sustains them continually
الْوَسْوَاس Waswaas (verse 4) – whisper, softly spoken words
الْخَنَّاس Al Khannas (verse 4) – something that hides and runs to the shadows and goes back (refers to Shaitan)
النَّاس Al Naas (verse 6) – refers to human devils.

€Notable Points

Allah instructs us to seek refuge with the Sustainer of mankind, the King of Mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the one who whispers in the hearts of man, then withdraws once that heart remembers Allah.

> Allah shows His majesty of Himself as our Lord. He is the King of all creation, He decrees for them life and death, honor and disgrace, wealth and poverty.

The whispering by the Shaitan is the small, quiet voice that inspires us to do things that we know we should not do. The repellant for him is to say "I seek refuge in Allah from the rejected Shaitan", he will recede. Only Allah can protect us from this; we are not strong enough ourselves.

Seek protection from the one who whispers into the breasts of mankind from among the jinn and men.

If we do not make these prayers of protection, as instructed by Allah, we are living unprotected lives. Allah is the Hearing and All-Knowing.

We as humans are noble, and this is shown in a number of ways. He made the angels prostrate to our father (Adam (عليه سلم)), He gave us all that is in the universe and the ability to gain superiority with our brain and understanding. Amongst the greatest signs of human's nobility is the fact that he gave us prophets and messengers from our own kind to help show us the way to serve Him.

Gems to Remember

- The Quran begins and ends with a dua that we should say to Allah. This is truly a book of guidance.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Naas

1. The Shaitan can be "big" and have great influence over us, and he can be made very "small" such that he has absolutely no ability to affect us. How do we as humans control this? What makes him big, what makes him small (related to his influence on us)?

2. What is our relationship to Allah exactly? Choose 33 of His Most Beautiful Names and briefly describe how that paricular attribute of His manifests itself in your life.

3. There are agents for the rejected Shaitan amongst humans. How do they work against others?

Suratul Ikhlaas

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ
1. Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allah, (the) One.

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ
2. "Allah-us-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks).

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ
3. "He begets not, nor was He begotten;

وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ
4. "And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."

The Backdrop

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was asked to describe Allah. They asked what He was made of (e.g. silver, gold), and what was His genealogy. Suratul Ikhlaas answers those questions. It is also a refutation to those who would suggest that Allah has offspring (سبحانه و تعالى).

This surah is the equivalent of one-third of the Quran.

☑ Word-for-Word

قُلْ Qul (verse 1) – say, commanding verb
أَحَدٌ Ahad (verse 1) – only, there is nothing like it
الصَّمَد As Samad (verse 2) – the one who people turn to for everything, throughout time in their times of need
كُفُوًا Kufuwan (verse 4) – comparable, equal, partner; from Kufoo' which is something similar

Notable Points

Allah commands us to say that he is Allah, the One and only. There is nothing like unto Him. Allah is the One Who all creatures need. He neither begets, nor is He begotten.

Even humans who consider themselves venerable and consecrated resist the notion that they should have a wife and children (e.g. priests). Yet, they continually ascribe this to Allah (سبحانه و تعالى).

Allah is the one who has no need for anything or anyone else. He does not need provision, he does not need rest. He is not born of anyone, neither is anyone born of Him. Even if someone were to dare to ascribe these things to Him, common sense should dissuade them and make them realize that any son must be like the father. Didn't Jesus sleep, eat and defecate? May Allah be exalted from Allah that they ascribe to Him. And there is no one who is comparable to Him.

Allah uses the word "ahad" for only, if He had used "wahid" there could be a second. He is One - after, and like whom there is no other.

Allah is calling and appealing to the intelligence of a person in this surah. How could there be one who is turned to by everyone, yet there be more than one of Him? How could we adequately serve two Gods? Would they not differ in their commandments? Would they not compete?

Cross References:
Suratul Maa'idah: ayah 79

مَّا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلاَّ رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ كَانَا يَأْكُلاَنِ الطَّعَامَ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الآيَاتِ ثُمَّ انظُرْ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

The Messiah ['Eesa (Jesus)], son of Maryam (Mary), was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him. His mother [Maryam (Mary)] was a Siddiqah [i.e. she believed in the words of Allah and His Books]. They both used to eat food (as any other human being, while Allah does not eat). Look how We make the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) clear to them, yet look how they are deluded away (from the truth).

Suratul An'aam: 101

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْض أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُن لَّهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ و هُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can He have children when He has no wife? He created all things and He is the All-Knower of everything.

Suratul Nahl: 17

أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لاَّ يَخْلُقُ أَفَلا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Is then He, Who creates as one who creates not? Will you not then remember?

Suratul Sajdah: 7

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنسَانِ مِن طِينٍ

Who made everything He has created good, and He began the creation of man from clay.

Suratul Mu'minoon: 91

فَمَنِ ابْتَغَى وَرَاء ذَلِكَ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ

But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors;

Gems to Remember

The recognition that Allah is One is engrained in our subconscious. Many people try hard to erase this natural programming from their minds. Yet it is easy to understand. The Trinity, and other misguided concepts of association, is taught over and over again because it is not naturally acceptable.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Ikhlaas

1. Find and report at least three definitions and interpretations of attribute of Allah "As-Samad".

2. Allah has given us a complete declaration of who He is. You do the same. Write down who you are, what you believe in, what your characteristics and purpose is. Refer to this declaration regularly to remind yourself of who you are.

3. Tirmidhi and Ahmad reported that a companion said to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), "I love this surah". The Prophet replied, "This love will take you to Paradise." Is there a surah that you love? List that surah and reasons why it is dear to your heart.

Extension Exercise – 4

He Begets Not

Recite then read (with their permission) the meaning of Suratul Ikhlaas to a practicing Christian (preferably one with whom you have an established rapport).

Report on their reaction, and any subsequent discussions that you may have had. Follow-up with them a week later, and report on any change in their perspective regarding this issue.

Suratul Abasa

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى
1. (The Prophet) frowned and turned away.

أَن جَاءهُ الْأَعْمَى
2. Because there came to him the blind man (i.e. 'Abdullah bin Umm Maktum, who came to the Prophet while he was preaching to one or some of the Quraish chiefs).

وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكَّى
3. And how can you know that he might become pure (from sins)?

أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ الذِّكْرَى
4. Or he might receive admonition, and the admonition might profit him?

أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنَى
5. As for him who thinks himself selfsufficient,

فَأَنتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّى
6. To him you attend;

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكَّى
7. What does it matter to you if he will not become pure (from disbelief: you are only a Messenger, your duty is to convey the Message of Allah).

وَأَمَّا مَن جَاءكَ يَسْعَى
8. But as to him who came to you running,

وَهُوَ يَخْشَى
9. And is afraid (of Allah and His Punishment).

فَأَنتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى
10. Of him you are neglectful and divert your attention to another,

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ
11. Nay, (do not do like this); indeed it (this Qur'an) is an admonition.

فَمَن شَاء ذَكَرَهُ
12. So whoever wills, let him pay attention to it.

فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ
13. (It is) in Records held (greatly) in honour (Al-Lauh al-Mahfuz),

مَّرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ
14. Exalted (in dignity), purified,

بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ
15. In the hands of scribes (angels).

كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ
16. Honourable and obedient.

قُتِلَ الْإِنسَانُ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ
17. Be cursed (the disbelieving) man! How ungrateful he is!

مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ
18. From what thing did He create him?

مِن نُّطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَّرَهُ
19. From Nutfah (male and female semen drops) He created him and then set him in due proportion.

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ
20. Then He makes the Path easy for him.

ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ
21. Then He causes him to die and puts him in his grave.

ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاء أَنشَرَهُ
22. Then when it is His Will, He will resurrect him (again).

كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ
23. Nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded him.

فَلْيَنظُرِ الْإِنسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ
24. Then let man look at his food:

أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاء صَبًّا
25. That We pour forth water in abundance.

ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا
26. And We split the earth in clefts.

فَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا
27. And We cause therein the grain to grow,

وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا

28. And grapes and clover plants (i.e. green fodder for the cattle),

وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا

29. And olives and datepalms,

وَحَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا

30. And gardens dense with many trees,

وَفَاكِهَةً وَأَبًّا

31. And fruits and Abba (herbage, etc.)

مَّتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ

32. (To be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle.

فَإِذَا جَاءتِ الصَّاخَّةُ

33. Then when there comes AsSakhkhah (the Day of Resurrection's second blowing of Trumpet)

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ

34. That Day shall a man flee from his brother,

وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ

35. And from his mother and his father,

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ

36. And from his wife and his children.

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ

37. Every man that Day will have enough to make him careless of others.

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ

38. Some faces that Day will be bright (true believers of islamic Monotheism),

ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ

39. Laughing, rejoicing at good news (of Paradise).

وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ

40. And other faces, that Day, will be duststained.

تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ

41. Darkness will cover them.

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَفَرَةُ الْفَجَرَةُ

42. Such will be the Kafarah (disbelievers in Allah, in His Oneness, and in His Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, etc.), the Fajarah (wicked evil doers).

The Backdrop

Abdullah ibn Umm Maktoum was a blind man who approached the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). He interrupted a conversation that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was having with the elite of Makkah. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), in his effort to concentrate on those whom he thought could benefit Islam most if they accepted Islam, frowned and turned away.

☑ Word-for-Word

قُتِلَ Qutila (verse 17) – curse (e.g. Allah is cursing the ungrateful men)
أَقْبَرَه Aqbarah (verse 21) – bury (i.e. man is buried versus animals which are left to decompose in the open)
أَنشَرَه Ansharah (verse 22) – bring to life
قَضْباً Qadhban (verse 28) - greenery
الصَّاخَّة Al Saakhah (verse 33) – great deafening noise, akin to a wail
غَبَرَة Ghabarah (verse 40)- dust-stained (i.e. their sins will cover them as dust would)
تَرْهَقُهَ Tarhaquha (verse 41) – darkness

€Notable Points

The blind man who interrupted

He frowned and turned away because a blind man came to him.

Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) did not disgrace the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) even while admonishing him. He did not say "Muhammad frowned", rather Allah protected him since his name was not mentioned here.

Although this surah saddened the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) greatly (to be chastised by Allah) he did not hide it. If he were to hide any part of the revelation, it would have been this surah.

Abdullah ibn Umm Makhtoum did not even see the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) reaction, he may have never known that he frowned and turned away from him. Yet, the fact that Allah admonished the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) still, is to let us know that our actions as well as the end results do count. The "no harm, no foul" rule does not apply in Islam.

Even if our actions do not actually harm others, we will still be rewarded and punished partly because of what we intend by an action.

How do you know that he might become pure? Or that he might receive admonition, and the admonition might benefit him? As for the one who considers himself self-sufficient, he is the one to whom you attend. What does it matter to you if he does not become pure? But as for the one who came to you running, and is afraid of the punishment, to him you are neglectful and divert your attention to someone else.

The message of Islam must be spread to everyone, including the poor, the handicapped and the people of ill-repute. As far as we are concerned, no one is to ever be considered beyond the reach of Islam. We must continually try to reach out to people and help bring about tazkiyyah (purification).

When spreading the message of Islam, we must retain the tenants of our faith and realize that the manner in which we give the message to people is also a part of these (tenants that must be observed).

As Muslims we should always return kind words with kindness. When someone pays us a compliment, we should make dua for them and for ourselves .

After this surah was revealed, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would give Abdullah ibn Umm Makhtoum a very special welcome because Allah has admonished the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) on his account. He was also left responsible on two occasions when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) went out for battle.

No (do not do this), they (these verses) are a reminder. Whoever wants, let him remember it.

When we give dawah, we are not responsible for what the person's reactions are. We must only deliver the message. We do not guide hearts. The guidance is for Allah to give

It (Quran) is in Records held in great honor. Exalted and purified, it is in the hands of honorable and obedient scribes.

The ungratefulness of man and his arrogance to his Creator

Cursed is man. How disbelieving he is. From what thing did Allah create him – from sexual emissions. He created him and proportioned him. Then, He makes his path easy for him. Then He causes him to die and puts him in the grave. Then when it is His Will, He will resurrect Him.

We are all created from the seemingly insignificant things(i.e. seminal fluid, clay), yet we grow to become so arrogant and ungrateful, forgetting the reason for our creation.

No. He (mankind) has not yet accomplished what He commanded him.

Example of Allah's All-Encompasing power to do anything He wished

Let man look at his food. We pour forth water in abundance. And We break open the earth, and We cause the grain to grow in it. And grapes and herbage, and olives and date-palms and gardens which are dense with many trees and fruits and grass. A provision and benefit for you and your grazing animals.

> In agriculture we also see many blessings. The fact that we cut and cut the crops, and new ones grow in their place. The one type of rain that feeds the many varieties of plants comes from Allah. He has created and given us access to such variety and so many blessed foods with many purposes (e.g. olives).
>
> Allah brings to our attention how He brings to life the plants after they've died, he can and will do the same for us. We pass by the ayaat (signs) everyday, and just keep walking. Few of us take the time to thank Allah for such things.
>
> The fact that we as humans are buried when we die also shows Allah's mercy. Unlike animals, which are left to rot where they die, we are buried and taken back to the earth from which we came, with dignity. What noble treatment for humans who are so ungrateful.

Glimpses of the Apocalypse

Then when the great (second) blowing of the trumpet comes, that Day man will flee from his brother, and from his mother and his father and from his wife and children.

Allah details the relations that we will abandon on the Day of Resurrection. He shows us that those who are closest to us will not matter. The fact that these relations are mentioned is significant.

Every man that Day will have enough worry to make him careless of others.

Humanity divided into two camps

On that day some faces will be bright, laughing and rejoicing at good news. Other faces on that Day will be stained with dust, and darkness will cover them. They will be the evil-doers, the disbelievers.

Gems to Remember

- Do not be fooled by looks and outwardly appearances. We do not know which person is best in the sight of Allah.

- We should stop and ponder over all details which Allah provides. Who will you leave on the Day of Resurrection? How many different varieties of food have you eaten today? How many people in need have you walked away from?

- When we read the Quran in other languages we have to realize that it is not actually the Quran that we are experiencing (as it should be). We miss the wisdom behind the exact word choices that Allah employs, as well as the beauty of the Arabic language, and messages that only a true understanding of it can convey.

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul 'Abasa

1. Review what we've learned in Juz 'Amma thus far, list the ways (with references) that Allah honors the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in the Quran.

2. Reflecting on verse 23 of Suratul 'Abasa, at what point would you say someone has fulfilled what Allah has commanded of him?

3. Make a list of the loved-ones from whom you will flee on the Day of Judgment. Perhaps this exercise will make you put your love for them into perspective and help you maintain a balanced relationship.

Extension Exercise – 5

He Smiled

Allah's message is universal and must be taken and shared with all of humanity. Go out with the intention of giving sharing the message of Islam to someone you might otherwise have ignored (of the same gender). Perhaps they would normally not cause you to stop and share Islam with them because of their appearance, manner or some abnormality. Approach them with a smile and your favorite "dawah ice-breaker" and tell them the basis of Islam.

Report on what you learned from this experience and how things progressed (if at all).

Suratul Qadr

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ
1. Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the night of Al-Qadr (Decree)

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ
2. And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is?

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ
3. The night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allah in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months, i.e. 83 years and 4 months).

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
4. Therein descend the angels and the Ruh [Jibrael (Gabriel)] by Allah's Permission with all Decrees,

سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ
5. Peace! (All that night, there is Peace and Goodness from Allah to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn.

The Backdrop

The month of Ramadhan is a blessed month, and in this most blessed month is a night that is significant in its enormity. The Night of Qadr, is the night on which the Qur'an was revealed. In it there is guidance for all mankind.

☑ Word-for-Word

الْقَدْرِ Al Qadr (verse 1) – nobility and lofty status or can also mean the decree and can also mean power.
الرُّوح Ar Rooh (verse 4) – here refers to Jibreel, the leader of the angels

€Notable Points

Verily, We sent it down (this Quran) in the night of Al-Qadr.

> This night is noble and enormous. In this night the decree of Allah is sent down to man.

Allah is encouraging us to contemplate what the virtues of this night are, and what to expect in it.

Allah says We revealed "it", He does not even mention the Qur'an, it is so monumental that there is no reason to, the matter He is referring to is understood.

The Qur'an was not all revealed in one night, yet it was sent down to the earthly heaven on the Night of Qadr. From there it was sent down over the course of 23 years.

The manner in which the Quran was revealed has many benefits:

1.) It made it easy to memorize and learn
2.) Having the revelations come at the time of, or subsequent to certain events was beneficial
3.) The abrogated verses are clear to us because of the "piece by piece" manner in which it was revealed.

"What will make you understand what the night of Al-Qadr is?"

Meaning nothing can make you understand the enormity of this, but here is a glance.

Three virtues of Laylatul Qadr are mentioned:

1.) This night is better than one thousand months
2.) The angels come down on this night in delegations
3.) There is peace (i.e. no danger happens, angels bring peace) that continues until the appearance of the dawn

The actions (i.e. fasting, prayers) that are done during this night is better than if those same actions were done continuously for one thousand months. This night comes during the last ten nights of Ramadhan.

Hadith Reference:

Narrated Ibn Abbas:
The Prophet said, "Look for the Night of Qadr in the last ten nights of Ramadhan, on the night when nine or seven or five nights remain out of the last ten nights of Ramadhan (i.e. 21, 23, 25, respectively)." (Bukhari)

There is wisdom in not knowing conclusively the exact night., since we might exert ourselves to put forth more effort in search of it, and do more good deeds to benefit from it. There are other examples of special ways to gain blessings, for which we do not have conclusions:

Opportunities for Special Blessings (for which we have no specificity):

a. The hour on Jumu'a (Friday) when all prayers will be accepted

b. The greatest name of Allah by which if someone asks of him their prayer will be answered
c. Whether our good deeds are actually being accepted by Allah, or if they are not
d. The exact time (date, month, year) of the Day of Judgment

Some of the signs of Laylutl Qadr are that it comes on a night that is neither intensely hot nor intensely cold, and the sun that rises the next morning appears without rays (e.g. not hurting your eyes)

Gems to Remember

Angels come to a place or a gathering where there is remembrance of Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) and obedience of Him taking place. The angels leave and abandon a place and time when there are things that are displeasing to Allah. When they leave, the special mercy that comes with them is gone.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Qadr

1. Describe in detail what happens on the Night of Decree, including especially the role and duties of the angels on this night. Use accepted sources to gather your information.

2. Describe in detail the signs of Laylatul Qar (beyond what was covered in these lessons). Use accepted sources to gather your information.

3. What do you hope Allah has decreed for you in the coming year?

Suratul Shams

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا

1. And by the sun and its brightness.

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا

2. And by the moon as it follows it (the sun).

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا

3. And by the day as it shows up (the sun's) brightness.

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا

4. And by the night as it conceals it (the sun).

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا

5. And by the heaven and He Who built it.

وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا

6. And by the earth and He Who spread it.

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

7. And by the Nafs (Adam or a person or a soul, etc.), and He Who perfected him in proportion;

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

8. Then He showed him what is wrong for him and what is right for him.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا

9. Indeed he succeeds who purifies his ownself (i.e. obeys and performs all that Allah ordered, by following the true Faith of islamic Monotheism and by doing righteous good deeds).

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا

10. And indeed he fails who corrupts his ownself (i.e. disobeys what Allah has ordered by rejecting the true Faith of islamic Monotheism or by following polytheism, etc. or by doing every kind of evil wicked deeds).

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا

11. Thamud (people) denied (their Prophet) through their transgression (by rejecting the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism, and by following polytheism, and by committing every kind of sin).

إِذِ انبَعَثَ أَشْقَاهَا

12. When the most wicked man among them went forth (to kill the she camel).

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا

13. But the Messenger of Allah (Salih) said to them: Be cautious! (Fear the evil end). That is the she camel of Allah! (Do not harm it) and bar it not from having its drink!

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذَنبِهِمْ فَسَوَّاهَا

14. Then they denied him and they killed it. So their Lord destroyed them because of their sin, and made them equal in destruction (i.e. all grades of people, rich and poor, strong and weak, etc.)!

وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَاهَا

15. And He (Allah) feared not the consequences thereof.

Who's Who

Thamud — The name of a tribe of people, believed to have lived during 400-600 AD. The Prophet Salih (عليه سلم) was sent to them, and they were reminded of the people who were destroyed before them (e.g. The People of 'Ad). Of the signs and miracles were sent to them, of which was a camel, which emerged from a mountain. They were admonished not to harm it, yet they killed the camel. Soon after they were destroyed with rocks of fire.

☑ Word-for-Word

دَسَّاهَا Dassaaha (verse 10) – hide (i.e. "sweep something under the rug")
أَشْقَاهَ Ashqaahaa (verse 12) – most wicked (i.e. the one who killed the camel)
فَدَمْدَم Damdama (verse 14) – covering after covering, refers to punishment after punishment.

€Notable Points

The creations of Allah

Allah testifies that the one who purifies himself succeeds and the one who does not (i.e corrupts himself) fails. He swears by eleven things:

The sun
The sun's brightness
The moon
The day
The night
The Heaven
Himself (Who built the heaven)
The earth
Himself (Who spread the earth)
A soul, man
Himself (Who perfected him (man) in Proportions)

After Allah perfected man, He showed him right and wrong. - Nobility comes with the worship of Allah. Without this worship, we are nothing.

Hadith Reference:

Zaid b. Alqam reported: I am not going to say anything but only that which Allah's Messenger (may peace be upgn him) used to say. He used to supplicate:" O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from incapacity, from sloth, from cowardice, from miserliness, decrepitude and from torment of the grave. O Allah, grant to my soul the sense of righteousness and purify it, for Thou art the Best Purifier thereof. Thou art the Protecting Friend thereof, and Guardian thereof. O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from the knowledge which does not benefit, from the heart that does not entertain the fear (of Allah), from the soul that does not feel contented and the supplication that is not responded." (Muslim)

Thamud and its tyranny

The people of Thamud denied their Prophet (عليه سلم), through their transgression when the most wicked among them killed the camel. But the Messenger of Allah (Salih (عليه سلم)) said to them "Be careful! That is the she-camel of Allah!"

Then they denied the camel water and they killed it. So (immediately after) their Lord destroyed them because of their sin, and made them equal in destruction – all alike. Allah does not fear the retaliation.

Not all of the People of Thamud killed the camel, yet they were all destroyed because they accepted the injustice and did not prevent the sin for fear of displeasing Allah.

Gems to Remember

- We are pre-programmed with what is wrong and what is right. The one who overrides these "factory-installed" inclinations is truly a failure.

- Reflect for a moment on the sun. It is 92 million miles away from the earth and that is a perfect distance. If it were even one-tenth of a mile too close, the earth would burn to a crisp. If it were just a little too far, the earth would freeze. Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) in His infinite mercy, made it just the right distance away.

✍Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Shams

1. There are three pairs in this surah. Identify and characterize them.

2. Allah shapes us and gives us faculties and order and proportion according to the purpose that we have to fulfill in our lives. What has He given you? Do you feel you are fulfilling your purpose?

3. One man killed the she-camel, yet all of the people were punished. What lesson can we learn from this?

Suratul Burooj

وَالسَّمَاء ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ
1. By the heaven, holding the big stars.

وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُودِ
2. And by the Promised Day (i.e. the Day of Resurrection);

وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ
3. And by the witnessing day (i.e. Friday), and by the witnessed day [i.e. the day of 'Arafat (Hajj) the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah];

قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأُخْدُودِ
4. Cursed were the people of the ditch (the story of the Boy and the King).

النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوَقُودِ
5. Fire supplied (abundantly) with fuel,

إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ
6. When they sat by it (fire),

وَهُمْ عَلَى مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ
7. And they witnessed what they were doing against the believers (i.e. burning them).

وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَن يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ
8. They had nothing against them, except that they believed in Allah, the All-Mighty, Worthy of all Praise!

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ
9. Who, to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And Allah is Witness over everything.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ
10. Verily, those who put into trial the believing men and believing women (by torturing them and burning them), and then do not turn in repentance (to Allah), will have the torment of Hell, and they will have the punishment of the burning Fire.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ
11. Verily, those who believe and do righteous good deeds, for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). That is the great success.

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ
12. Verily, (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) the Grip (Punishment) of your Lord is severe.

إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ
13. Verily, He it is Who begins (punishment) and repeats (punishment in the Hereafter) (or originates the creation of everything, and then repeats it on the Day of Resurrection).

وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ
14. And He is Oft-Forgiving, full of love (towards the pious who are real true believers of Islamic Monotheism),

ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ
15. Owner of the throne, the Glorious

فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ
16. He does what He intends (or wills).

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ
17. Has the story reached you of the hosts,

فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ
18. Of Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and Thamud?

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْذِيبٍ
19. Nay! The disbelievers (persisted) in denying (Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Message of Islamic Monotheism).

وَاللَّهُ مِن وَرَائِهِم مُّحِيطٌ
20. And Allah encompasses them from behind! (i.e. all their deeds are within His Knowledge, and He will requite them for their deeds).

بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ
21. Nay! This is a Glorious Qur'an,

فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ
22. (Inscribed) in Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz (The Preserved Tablet)!

The Backdrop

Suhaib reported that Allah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) thus said: "There lived a king before you and he had a (court) magician. As he (the magician) grew old, he said to the king: I have

grown old, send some young boy to me so that I should teach him magic. He (the king) sent to him a young man so that he should train him (in magic). And on his way (to the magician) he (the young man) found a monk sitting there. He (the young man) listened to his (the monk's) talk and was impressed by it. It became his habit that on his way to the magician he met the monk and set there and he came to the magician (late).He (the magician) beat him because of delay. He made a complaint of that to the monk and he said to him: When you feel afraid of the magician, say: Members of my family had detained me. And when you feel afraid of your family you should say: The magician had detained me. It so happened that there came a huge beast (of prey) and it blocked the way of the people, and he (the young boy) said: I will come to know today whether the magician is superior or the monk is superior. He picked up a stone and said: O Allah, if the affair of the monk is dearer to Thee than the affair of the magician, cause death to this animal so that the people should be able to move about freely. He threw that stone towards it and killed it and the people began to move about (on the path freely).He (the young man) then came to the monk and Informed him and the monk said: Sonny, today you are superior to me. Your affair has come to a stage where I find that you would be soon put to a trial, and in case you are put to a trial don't give my clue. That young man began to treat the blind and those suffering from leprosy and he in fact began to cure people from (all kinds) of illness. When a companion of the king who had gone blind heard about him, he came to him with numerous gifts and said: If you cure me, all these things collected together here would be yours. He said: I myself do not cure anyone. It is Allah Who cures and if you affirm faith in Allah, I shall also supplicate Allah to cure you. He affirmed his faith in Allah and Allah cured him and he came to the king and sat by his side as he used to sit before. The king said to him: Who restored your eyesight? He said: My Lord. Thereupon he said: It means that your Lord is One besides me. He said: My Lord and your Lord is Allah, so he (the king) took hold of him and tormented him till he gave a clue of that boy. The young man was thus summoned and the king said to him: O boy, it has been conveyed to me that you have become so much proficient in your magic that you cure the blind and those suffering from leprosy and you do such and such things. Thereupon he said: I do not cure anyone; it is Allah Who cures, and he (the king) took hold of him and began to torment him. So he gave a clue of the monk. The monk was thus summoned and it was said to him: You should turn back from your religion. He, however, refused to do so. He (ordered) for a saw to be brought (and when it was done) he (the king) placed it in the middle of his head and tore it into parts till a part fell down. Then the courtier of the king was brought and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. And he refused to do so, and the saw was placed in the midst of his head and it was torn till a part fell down. Then that young boy was brought and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. He refused to do so and he was handed over to a group of his courtiers. And he 'said to them: Take him to such and such mountain; make him climb up that mountain and when you reach its top (ask him to renounce his faith) but if he refuses to do so, then throw him (down the mountain).So they took him and made him climb up the mountain and he said: O Allah, save me from them (in any way) Thou likest and the mountain began to quake and they all fell down and that person came walking to the king. The king said to him: What has happened to your companions? He said: Allah has saved me from them. He again handed him to some of his courtiers and said: Take him and carry him in a small boat and when you reach the middle of the ocean (ask him to renounce) his religion, but if he does not renounce his religion throw him (into the water).So they took him and he said: O Allah, save me from them and what they want to do. It was quite soon that the boat turned over and

they were drowned and he came walking to the king, and the king said to him: What has happened to your companions? He said: Allah has saved me from them, and he said to the king: You cannot kill me until you do what I ask you to do. And he said: What is that? He said: You should gather people in a plain and hang me by the trunk (of a tree).Then take hold of an arrow from the quiver and say: In the name of Allah, the Lord of the worlds; then shoot an arrow and if you do that then you would be able to kill me. So he (the king) called the people in an open plain and tied him (the boy) to the trunk of a tree, then he took hold of an arrow from his quiver and then placed the arrow in the bow and then said: In the name of Allah, the Lord of the young boy; he then shot an arrow and it hit his temple. He (the boy) placed his hands upon the temple where the arrow had hit him and he died and the people said: We affirm our faith in the Lord of this young man, we affirm our faith in the Lord of this young man, we affirm our faith in the Lord of this young man. The courtiers came to the king and it was said to him: Do you see that Allah has actually done what you aimed at averting. They (the people) have affirmed their faith in the Lord. He (the king) commanded ditches to be dug at important points in the path. When these ditches were dug, and the fire was lit in them it was said (to the people): He who would not turn back from this (boy's) religion would be thrown in the fire or it would be said to them to jump in that. (The people courted death but did not renounce the religion) till a woman came with her child and she felt hesitant in jumping into the fire and the child said to her: 0 mother, endure (this ordeal) for it is the Truth." (Muslim)

☑ Word-for-Word

الْبُرُوجِ Al-Burooj (verse 1)- big stars
قُتِلَ Qutila (verse 4) – cursed, literally means killed; this is a statement of reality
بَطْشَ Battsha (verse 12) – grip, seizure
الْعَرْشِ Al Arsh (verse 15) – throne
الْمَجِيدُ Al Majeed (verse 15) – The Glorious One (a name of Allah)
فَعَّالٌ Fa'al (verse 16) – consistently doing things, again and again
الْجُنُود Al Junood (verse 17) – hosts, groups (e.g. as in the groups of armies gathered to fight against the Believers)
مُّحِيطٌ Muheet (verse 20) – encompasses, surrounds

€Notable Points

Allah appeals to different kinds of logic, and different senses. He uses history, science and in-depth communicational devices to speak to us and guide us.

From the pages of History

Allah testifies by the heavens, showing us the nobility and the loftiness of this creation. We are also made to realize that we should pay attention to these heavens.

We must be careful to acknowledge the true reasons for the creations of Allah. The stars for instance have three purposes:

a. To decorate the heavens
b. They act as missiles to hit the jinn who try to come into the heavens to hear of the things to come on earth (as the angels may discuss them)
c. To guide travelers

We must therefore not use the stars for other purposes that will displease Allah, such as astrology and fortune-telling.

And by the Promised Day and by the witness and what is witnessed could mean the Day of Judgment and the Prophets that will be witnesses for (and against) their nations on that day. Clarifying that they taught them the truth as Allah instructed, and that the falsehood of their nation came after the Prophet was taken away from his people. There are over ten different interpretations of what this could refer to.

Allah warns those who wish to test the believers, especially those who punish the righteous with fire. No one punishes with fire, except the Lord of Fire.

Cursed and destroyed are those people of the ditches of fire, which were red with fire.

This is a statement of reality – they are cursed. They were sitting by the fire watching the believers be publicly tortured. And they only resented the people they killed because they believed in Allah, to Whom belongs the dominion of the Heavens and the Earth. Allah is over all things a witness.

Cursed is the tyranny that did this injustice

Those who punish the Believers, still have an opportunity to repent, but if they do not turn in repentance to Allah, then they will have the torment of Hell and their punishment will be the burning Fire.

Even when we have done the worst of things (except associating Partners with Allah) we can always turn back, repent and be forgiven. Allah knows best.

Blessed are the patient ones

Those who believe and do righteous good deeds will have Gardens with rivers flowing under them, and that is the great success.

Allah's power to avenge

The Punishment of your Lord is severe. It is He who begins punishment and repeats it in the Hereafter and He is also Oft-Forgiving, full of love.

Cross Reference:
Al-Fatihah: 1-3

الرَّحْمـنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ للّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists). The Merciful, the Mercy giving.

It is a mercy for us that amongst the Allah's descriptions of Himself and His exalted status, include the "Loving", "Merciful" "Oft-Forgiving".

Five Qualities of Allah Mentioned in this Surah (verses 12-16):

1.) He is intense in revenge
2.) He has power of life and death and can repeat these many times over
3.) Allah is Forgiving and Loving
4.) He is the Owner of the Exalted Throne
5.) He does what He wills

The example of Fir'awn and Thamud

Allah uses "Did the story of those hosts of Fir'awn and Thamud who gathered to fight against Allah reach you?"

The disbelievers persistently deny and Allah encompasses them from behind. If someone chooses this path and becomes tyrannical, they will not escape.

The truth will always prevail

This Quran is Glorious, and it is inscribed in a Preserved Tablet.

Gems to Remember

- The punishing disbelievers watched as person after person was burned alive and yet did not denounce their faith. If we are being tortured, it is up to us whether or not we hold on until death. If someone is compelled there is no sin upon them, so long as the disbelief is on their tongues and not in their hearts.

- We should not "put the Believers on trial". It is forbidden to put the Believers in a position to have hardship, or to feel uncomfortable for no cause. Our duty is to make things easy for one another, and lighten each other's burdens.

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Burooj

1. Verse 3 in Suratul Burooj speaks of the "witness". We find throughout the Quran several references to what may witness for or against us on the Day of Judgement. Find these references, and list them with the witnesses that they mention.

2. While the "forces" that fight against Allah are mentioned in verse 17 of Suratul Burooj, what forces does man have really? What makes us truly strong and undeterred toward victory?

3. Find the various meanings and interpretations of Allah's name "Al-Wadood". List them with the various ways that this quality of Allah's is manifested in your eyes.

Suratul Teen

وَالتِّينِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ
1. By the fig, and the olive,

وَطُورِ سِينِينَ
2. By Mount Sinai,

وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ
3. And by this city of security (Makkah),

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ
4. Verily, We created man of the best stature (mold),

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ
5. Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ
6. Save those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, then they shall have a reward without end (Paradise).

فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالدِّينِ
7. Then what (or who) causes you (O disbelievers) to deny the Recompense (i.e. Day of Resurrection)?

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ
8. Is not Allah the Best of judges?

☑ Word-for-Word

الْأَمِينِ al- Amin (verse 3) - secure
خَلَقْنَا Khalaqna (verse 4) – We created
تَقْوِيم Taqweem (verse 4) – straightened
أَسْفَل Asfal (verse 5) – low

€Notable Points

The sacredness of the Holy Lands

Allah swears by the fig and the olive (which were common in the land of Eesa (عليه سلم)), by Mount Sinai (the land of Musa (عليه سلم)), and by this city of security (the land of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم)).

> Allah chose specific lands to give noble status. For instance, the valley of Makkah is dedicated to Allah for worship. Even in modern times the absence of things, which are common in other cities (i.e. vegetation), makes it easy to be set aside for worship.
>
> In these places a person's reward (and punishment) is increased for the actions that they do. These places, such as those Allah swears by in this surah, are special – chosen for a reason. There were Prophets sent to all nations, however he chose these places for veneration.
>
> The lands are also blessed because of the nobility of the people who have lived there.

The rise and fall of the human

Humans were created in the best of forms and stature.

> Even the manner in which the human eats is a mercy from Allah, showing Allah's favor upon us. Unlike the animals which bend down their faces to get their sustenance, we are allowed to bring our food up to ourselves.

Man is reduced to the lowest of the low.

Except who?

Those who believe and do righteous deeds are exempt from this debasement and they will have a reward without any end.

> We must actually do good works. It is not only the thought that counts.

Open your eyes!

Then what causes those who disbelieve to deny the repayment and recompense of the Day of Judgment? Isn't Allah the Best of Judges?

> Of course, when Allah asks if He is the best of those who judge, we answer "Balaa" (Certainly). Yet, we call His judgment into question when get caught up in what we feel is fair and unfair in the religion of Islam (i.e. girls share of inheritance, polygyny etc).
>
> Suratul Mulk v, 8 -11

Interview with the people of hellfire

Gems to Remember

- We should ask ourselves who and what is making us disbelieve? Actually make a list of the forces, which are holding you back from completely obeying and worshipping Allah. Is something hardening your heart toward the disobedience of Allah?

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Teen

1. There is no fault in Allah's creation. How would you then explain the things that we see that seem abnormal and misshapen? Support your answers.

2. Allah is Wise and Just. Why do we fear Him? Support your answers. Consult the works of the knowledgeable to answer this question.

3. Research information about olives and their oil. What makes them special?

Suratul Quraish

لِإِيلَافِ قُرَيْشٍ

1. (It is a great Grace and Protection from Allah), for the taming of the Quraish,

إِيلَافِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ

2. (And with all those Allah's Grace and Protections for their taming, We cause) the (Quraish) caravans to set forth safe in winter (to the south), and in summer (to the north without any fear),

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ

3. So let them worship (Allah) the Lord of this House (the Ka'bah in Makkah).

الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُم مِّن جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُم مِّنْ خَوْفٍ

4. (He) Who has fed them against hunger, and has made them safe from fear.

The Backdrop

The Quraish would take journeys to Yemen in winter and to Sham in the summer to acquire provisions. There was no notable agriculture in the hills and valleys of Makkah. They would trade their goods and earn a major source of income. Another considerable source of income, especially for the noblemen of Makkah, was the pilgrimage to Makkah that other tribes from surrounding areas would make. Each of the Makkan tribes had a responsibility toward the pilgrims and the maintenance of the Ka'bah (i.e. keeping the keys safe, giving water to the pilgrims). There was often intertribal war-fare because they were a proud people who protected their honor at all costs.

Who's Who

Quraish: the Arab tribe to which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) belonged, which settled in the Hijaz (western region of Saudi Arabia), before his birth. They became prominent members of the Makkan hierarchy and eventually became the ruling tribe of the city, holding the most important trade routes and responsibilities toward the Ka'bah. Eventually, the tribal leaders were also to become the harshest enemies of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his followers, making every attempt to protect their status by quieting the message of Islam. However some of them, including many of the most elite, became Muslim and began to support the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), while others of them (closest to the Prophet) remained disbelievers until their death.

The Quraish were blessed with many favors from Allah, which were given to no other tribe of their time.

Some Blessings for the Quraish:

1.) The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was sent from amongst them, it was their tribe that Allah chose for Prophethood.
2.) Allah blessed them with the special status to decide who would have access to the Ka'bah
3.) They were responsible for giving water to the Pilgrims to Allah's house
4.) Allah saved them from the attack of Abraha and his army with the elephant
5.) Allah revealed an entire surah of the Quran for them

☑ Word-for-Word

إِيلَافِ Eelaaf (verse 1) – customary things; refers to the summer and winter journeys to which the Quraish were accustomed.

آمَنَهُم مِّنْ Aamanahum min (verse 4) – refers to the fact that Allah made the Quraish safe in their journeys because of their high status as people of Makkah, and their closeness to the Ka'bah

€Notable Points

Allah reminds the people of Quraish of the many blessings, favors and times of ease they experienced because of His Grace upon them. Among these blessings s the fact that Allah allowed their caravans to travel safely each year in winter and summer. Allah gave the Meccans a "passport" through the desert. They were free to go without harm, as people would not harm them because they were the neighbors of "the House". He also fed them and kept them safe from fear.

> Many of the tribes of Makkah were not favored in such ways as were the Quraish. The nomadic tribes roamed the desert in search of the food that Allah provided with relative ease to the Quraish.. The Quraish were also very prosperous in their business transactions while other tribes were known for their thievery and desperation for sustenance.

After being reminded of the blessings, which He has bestowed on them, they are commanded to worship the Lord of the House (of which they were keepers).

Allah repelled the harm for them and brought forth the good. We should never fear going to Makkah: there you will be safe if Allah wills.

Gems to Remember

- Sometimes (like the Quraish and the Ka'bah) we allow the very things that Allah has given us as favors to cause us to forget Allah and become arrogant. We also lose sight of our true purpose in life, and the trusts that we have been given, and we focus on the material things of this world.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Quraysh

1. Explain, after consulting accepted sources, why there are some humans favored by Allah over others.

2. Being the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) family, what is ironic about the principal responsibility of the Quraysh in Makkah.

3. How did Allah grant the Quraysh security from fear? What should they have feared normally?

Suratul Qaari'ah

الْقَارِعَةُ
1. Al-Qaari'ah (the striking Hour i.e. the Day of Resurrection),

مَا الْقَارِعَةُ
2. What is the striking (Hour)?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ
3. And what will make you know what the striking (Hour) is?

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ
4. It is a Day whereon mankind will be like moths scattered about,

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنفُوشِ
5. And the mountains will be like carded wool,

فَأَمَّا مَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ
6. Then as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy,

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ
7. He will live a pleasant life (in Paradise).

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ
8. But as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be light,

فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ
9. He will have his home in Haawiyah (pit, i.e. Hell).

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَهْ
10. And what will make you know what it is?

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ
11. (It is) a hot blazing Fire!

☑ Word-for-Word

الْقَارِعَةُ Al-Qaari'ah (verse 1) – another name for the Day of Resurrection
قَارِعَةٌ Qaari'ah (verse 1) – strike with intense pounding
خَفَّتْ Khaffat (verse 8) – will be light

فَأُمُّه Fa'ummuhu (verse 9) – his abode is made; word used here is "mother", as if the person on that day who is scattered and frightened will run to their mother (i.e. the pit of Hell)
هَاوِيَة Haawiyah (verse 10) – the name of the part of Hellfire where people fall in (e.g. the pit)

€Notable Points

A Glimpse at Resurrection – the graves and the mountains

Al-Qaariah, the striking hour of the Day of Resurrection is upon us. What is this striking hour? And what will make you know what it is?

> Allah gives us a peek at the conditions of this day, although nothing can make us fully understand.

It is a Day whereon all of mankind will be like moths which are scattered about, having no direction of their own. And the mountains will be like puffed up wool - piled and fluffy.

The weighty scale

Then as for him whose balance will be heavy (with good deeds), he will have a pleasant life.

> Hadith Reference:
>
> Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: "Two are the expressions which are light on the tongue, but heavy in scale, dear to the Compassionate One: Hallowed be Allah and praise is due to Him (SubhanAllaahi wa bihamdihi) (and) Hallowed be Allah, the Great (SubhanAllahil-Adheem." (Muslim)

The frail scale

But as for him whose scale is light (with few good deeds), he will have his home in the pit of Hell. There he will scream as a result of intense fear. Then the even more fearful fire will embrace him.

And what will make you know what it is? It is a fire blazing fiercely, intensely hot.

Gems to Remember

- Allow these messages to pound on your heart. The end is near, the warning has been given. Your final home awaits you. Imagine falling and falling and falling…into the pit of Hell.

- As we are carrying heavy burdens in this world, which are never more than we can bear, we should remember that through patience and good actions, the weight of these burdens can be shifted on the Day of the Striking Calamity to weigh heavily on our scale.

- Make it a practice everyday to remember Allah with the light words that are beloved to Allah as the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) instructed. Perhaps they will help to make our scale heavy on that day. (See hadith above)

✍ Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Qaari'ah

1. Characterize moths, using their description and habits. Be reminded that humans will be scattered about as moths on the Day of Resurrection.

2. Identify (citing references) the many names and descriptions of the Hellfire.

3. Characterize fire. Is our fire the same as that of the Hellfire? Find the ahadith that mention the degree of heat present in the Hellfire.

Suratul Humazah

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ
1. Woe to every slanderer and backbiter.

الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ
2. Who has gathered wealth and counted it,

يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ
3. He thinks that his wealth will make him last forever!

كَلَّا لَيُنبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ
4. Nay! Verily, he will be thrown into the crushing Fire.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ
5. And what will make you know what the crushing Fire is?

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَةُ
6. The fire of Allah, kindled,

الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ
7. Which leaps up over the hearts,

إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّؤْصَدَةٌ
8. Verily, it shall be closed in on them,

فِي عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ
9. In pillars stretched forth (i.e. they will be punished in the Fire with pillars, etc.).

The Backdrop

? Al Akhnas ibn Shurayth became known as the one who continuously mocked and humiliated others, making fun of their imperfections. He would also do this to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Although this person has been associated with the reason for the revelation of this surah, Allah says the curse is for everyone who humiliates others.

☑ Word-for-Word

وَيْلٌ Wayl (verse 1) – statement of curse and punishment; also a valley in Hellfire
هُمَزَ Humazah (verse 1) – excessive, habitual slanderers
لُّمَزَةٍ Lumazah (verse 1) – excessive, habitual backbiters; from "Lamaz" which is making a sign pointing to something else (i.e. highlights the faults of others behind their backs with their eyes)
لَيُنبَذَنَّ Nabth (verse 4) – flung and thrown down; the word "layunbadhana" (added the lam and noon) adds emphasis
الْحُطَمَةِ Al Hutamah (verse 4) – a name of hellfire, it is called so because it crushes anything that enters it (i.e. like metal in a scrapyard)
تَطَّلِعُ Tattali'u (verse 7) – it covers and leaps upon the person and the pain reaches all the way to the heart

€Notable Points

The mocking tongue

Allah says Woe to every slanderer and backbiter.

> What makes people mock others? People often mock to protect themselves to from being mocked. They may also do this to become known by the people and make a "name" for themselves. Someone may also do this because they do not understand the matter that they are mocking.

And the worship of wealth

The one who gathers money and counts it is always concerned with what he has and the possessions he owns. He thinks that his wealth will make him last forever.

The end of those who choose such a wretched path

He will be thrown into the crushing fire, and we can never truly understand it. It never goes out, it is always kindled.

> It attacks the hearts and leaps upon it in Hell. It will not be an open vast space. Its inhabitants will be closed in and chained in the darkness of the raging, burning punishment. Allah knows best.
>
> Although we may have questions in our minds regarding how Jannah and Jahannam will be, and how each of their inhabitants will be treated, it should be sufficient enough for us to be prepared based on the descriptions that Allah has

provided. If we contemplate on these, we will surely have enough to motivate us toward our end.

It is as if the Hellfire is a living, breathing beast - it even speaks.

Gems to Remember

- Do you have a share of the curse for the mocker and backbiter? It is easy to fall into this, especially when we joke, talk and laugh excessively. Stay quiet and think of what you are about to say and do, before it is done. It is not okay to mock anyone for any reason (neither with tongue, nor eyes, nor hands).

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Humazah

1. What is the Islamic definition of backbiting? What is it likened to?

2. What is the Islamic definition of slander?

3. The companions would weep when they recited or heard verses 4-5. Why do you think they were affected?

Suratul Balad

لَا أُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ
1. I swear by this city (Makkah);

وَأَنتَ حِلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ
2. And you are free (from sin, to punish the enemies of Islam on the Day of the conquest) in this city (Makkah),

وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدَ
3. And by the begetter (i.e. Adam) and that which he begot (i.e. his progeny);

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ
4. Verily, We have created man in toil.

أَيَحْسَبُ أَن لَّن يَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ
5. Thinks he that none can overcome him?

يَقُولُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَالًا لُّبَدًا
6. He says (boastfully): "I have wasted wealth in abundance!"

أَيَحْسَبُ أَن لَّمْ يَرَهُ أَحَدٌ
7. Thinks he that none sees him?

أَلَمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُ عَيْنَيْنِ
8. Have We not made for him a pair of eyes?

وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ
9. And a tongue and a pair of lips?

وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ
10. And shown him the two ways (good and evil)?

فَلَا اقْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ
11. But he has made no effort to pass on the path that is steep.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ
12. And what will make you know the path that is steep?

فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ
13. (It is) Freeing a neck (slave, etc.)

أَوْ إِطْعَامٌ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ
14. Or giving food in a day of hunger (famine),

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ
15. To an orphan near of kin.

أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ
16. Or to a Miskin (poor) afflicted with misery.

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ
17. Then he became one of those who believed, and recommended one another to perseverance and patience, and (also) recommended one another to pity and compassion.

أُوْلَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ
18. They are those on the Right Hand (the dwellers of Paradise),

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا هُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ
19. But those who disbelieved in Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they are those on the Left Hand (the dwellers of Hell).

عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّؤْصَدَةٌ
20. The Fire will be shut over them (i.e. they will be enveloped by the Fire without any opening or window or outlet).

The Backdrop

When this surah was revealed, the climate for the Muslims in Makkah was at its worst. There were plots to murder and expel the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the persecution of his followers was intense.

☑ Word-for-Word

كَبَد Kabad (verse 4) – pain and hardship; human life is filled with this
أَهْلَكْتُ Ahlaktu (verse 6) – wasted, throw away
مَالًا لُبَدًا Maa laan lubada (verse 6) – as in so much wealth that it is not feared that one will run out
اقْتَحَمَ Iqtaham (verse 11) – literally to slam into something with intensity and violence. to pass something with speed and strength
الْعَقَبَة Aqabah (verse 11) – steep, hard to traverse, mountain pass
الْمَيْمَنَة Al Maymanah (verse 18)- the right, people of Paradise

الْمَشْأَمَة Al Mash'amah (verse 19) – the left, people of Hellfire

€Notable Points

Humans and the pain of early life

Allah testifies by Makkah Al Mukarramah, the reality of it so truthful that the testification used is that of the most intensity (e.g. "I do not have to testify").

You are free in this land, it is a blessed place and the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) presence increases its blessedness.

By the begetter and that which he begot, could mean by Adam and his children (or parents in general and their children).

Indeed, We have created humans in toil.

> Allah reassures the believer that even though they are experiencing hardship because of the religion, they would nevertheless have to go through the toil of life.
>
> However, other humans who are not enduring the turmoil for the sake of Allah, are going through it in vain.
>
> Allah testifies that hardship is a part of man's existence, from his conception, to his birth to his weaning, to his provision in life and death.
>
> Cross Reference:
> Suratul Nisaa verse 28
>
> **يُرِيدُ اللّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الإِنسَانُ ضَعِيفًا**
>
> Allah wishes to lighten your (difficulties): For man was created weak.

Those that exhausted wealth in hindering this message

Does he think that nothing can overcome him? Such that he boasts, "I have wasted wealth in abundance!" Does he think that no one sees him?

> Cross Reference :
> Suratul Anfaal verse 35
>
> وَمَا كَانَ صَلاَتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ إِلاَّ مُكَاء وَتَصْدِيَةً فَذُوقُواْ الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

Their Salaat (prayer) at the House (of Allah, i.e. the Ka'bah at Makkah) was nothing but whistling and clapping of hands. Therefore taste the punishment because you used to disbelieve.

Look at your creation (i.e. the creation of man)!

Have We not made for him a pair of eyes and a tongue and a pair of lips and We guided him to the two ways?

From the meat, fat and bones Allah allows so many things to function in our bodies. It is bone that makes us walk and hear. Our speech is also created from meat, fat and bones (tongue, voice box and lips). The creation of Allah cannot be compared, nor completely comprehended.
Even the fluids in our body (e.g. saliva, mucus, ear wax) miraculously remain in their proper places and cannot be exchanged.

Allah reminds man of His blessings upon him so that he will take heed and desist from the misguided path that he has taken. Will man not take the path of success which will save him in the hereafter?

The Resurrection and its hardship

Man has not attempted to pass on the path which is steep and that leads to goodness and success. And how will you know what the steep path is?

Allah tells us how to climb the mountain pass. It is to free a slave, or give food during the time of famine to an orphan near of kin, or to a poor person who is cleaving to the dust out of misery and desperation.

It should be noted that the day of hunger is the most blessed time to give when everyone around us is in need and it seems that the wealth will end soon,. Likewise, the best orphan to care for is the one who is of some close relation because they have two rights over you (as an orphan and as family). The person who is desperate and poor is the one who is often homeless and has no shelter. He is flat on the ground with nothing to protect him from the harshness of life.

We have been shown that the "steepest", best and most blessed way to live is by helping others. Muslims should be the best humanitarians on earth. However, we have strayed far away from this, consequently other organizations have come to the rescue of the Muslimeen.

As for the virtue of freeing a slave the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Whoever builds a masjid will have a house in Paradise. And whoever frees a Muslim will get ransom from the Hellfire, and whoever has gray hair in Islam will have light on the Day of Judgment."

How do we protect ourselves?

If we pass on the steep path then we will become one of those people who recommends one another to perseverance and patience and who also recommends one another to pity and compassion. These are the people on the Right (successful). But those who disbelieve in the signs, evidence and verses of Allah are the people of the Left Hand (dwellers of Hellfire). The fire will be all around them, they will be enclosed in it.

Gems to Remember

- When someone asks us for charity, we should be thankful that Allah has sent someone to take this wealth to the Hereafter for us, where it will benefit us when we need it most.

- As long as we live, we have a choice.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Balad

1. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was tested and tried most in his hometown during the time when this surah was revealed. Yet, during this time we have many examples of his "passing on the steep path" as is described here. Give examples from the life of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) which illustrate his application of this surah.

2. Why do you suppose verse 3 of Suratul Balad is: "And the begetter, and that he begot." Choose the correct answer, support it with proof:
   a. Children are sacred, like the city of Makkah.
   b. Parents love and are happy for their children despite the many difficulties involved in their care.
   c. Parent have a great status in Islam

3. Imagine life without your eyes, lips and tongue. Report your thoughts.

Suratul Taariq

وَالسَّمَاء وَالطَّارِقِ
1. By the heaven, and At-Taariq (the night-comer, i.e. the bright star);

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ
2. And what will make you to know what At-Taariq (night-comer) is?

النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ
3. (It is) the star of piercing brightness;

إِن كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ
4. There is no human being but has a protector over him (or her) (i.e. angels in charge of each human being guarding him, writing his good and bad deeds, etc.)

فَلْيَنظُرِ الْإِنسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ
5. So let man see from what he is created!

خُلِقَ مِن مَّاء دَافِقٍ
6. He is created from water gushing forth

يَخْرُجُ مِن بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ
7. Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs,

إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ
8. Verily, (Allah) is Able to bring him back (to life)!

يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ
9. The Day when all the secrets (deeds, prayers, fasting, etc.) will be examined (as to their truth).

فَمَا لَهُ مِن قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ
10. Then will (man) have no power, nor any helper.

وَالسَّمَاء ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ
11. By the sky (having rain clouds) which gives rain, again and again.

وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ
12. And the earth which splits (with the growth of trees and plants),

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ

13. Verily! This (the Qur'an) is the Word that separates (the truth from falsehood, and commands strict legal laws for mankind to cut the roots of evil).

وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ

14. And it is not a thing for amusement.

إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا

15. Verily, they are but plotting a plot (against you O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم).

وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا

16. And I (too) am planning a plan.

فَمَهِّلِ الْكَافِرِينَ أَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْدًا

17. So give a respite to the disbelievers. Deal you gently with them for a while.

☑ Word-for-Word

الطَّارِق Taariq (verse 1) – everything that comes in night is called a Taariq, it is taken from Tarq, which is to hit something intensely
الثَّاقِبُ Ath-Thaaqib (verse 3) – the star which pierces the darkness with its light
فَصْلٌ Fasl (verse 13) – separator, dividing
هَزْلٌ Hazl (verse 14) – amusement, joke, fun
رُوَيْدًا Ruwayda (verse 17) – a small span of time

€Notable Points

Every soul is being watched

Allah swears by the heavens and the bright stars.

What will make you know what At-Tariq is?

It is a bright piercing star.

There is no human being that does not have a protector (i.e. from the recording Angels). There are Angels who keep dangerous things from happening to us which Allah has not yet decreed. Likewise there may be goodness for us but because of our sins, they may be diverted from us.

We should also recognize that Allah is also watching us and act accordingly.

Allah has the Power to bring life from death

So let man see that from which he is created. He is created from water gushing forth, proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs.

Verily, Allah is able to bring him back to life!
It is easier to recreate something than to create it from the beginning.

> Duplicating is much easier. If Allah can create these billions of humans from nothing, it is far easier for Him to simply bring that person back to life. He brings life and death every single day all around us.

All secrets exposed

The Day when all secrets will be examined, he will not have power nor any helper.

The truth of the Way

Allah swears by the sky, that gives rain again and again, and the earth which splits with the growth of trees and plants. It splits with life. This Qur'an is the Word which separates the truth from falsehood. It is not meant for amusement.

The plots of the wicked

The wicked will plot their plots, however Allah too has a plan.

> Their plots are weak, despite all of their efforts to destroy Islam. So allow the disbelievers some time and deal gently with them for a while. The time (victory) is coming- soon.
>
> It is upon the duty of the believer to proceed with faith and perseverance until the victory of Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) comes. The transgressors may appear to have the upper hand, but there should be no doubt about the swiftness and severity of Allah's punishment. It will come.

Gems to Remember

- Take a moment and focus on our bodies and how they maintain their temperature, break down food for energy and how each system (i.e. skeletal, muscular, nervous etc.) works independently yet in harmony to keep the body going. Each tiny cell knows exactly what it is supposed to do and where it should go. Who orchestrated this master plan? Who executed it?

✍Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Taariq

1. Does verse 14 of Suratul Taariq from what you can prove mean that we should not listen to the Quran for entertainment purposes? Search the collections of Fiqh (Islamic rulings) to determine the answer, and also the interpretations of Quran.

2. Find a picture of a human embryo and its growth cycle. Perhaps this will enable us to think more clearly about our creation.

3. Explain the how the Quran is a "distinguisher."

Suratul Ghaashiyah

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ

1. Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection);

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ

2. Some faces, that Day, will be humiliated (in the Hell-fire, i.e. the faces of all disbelievers, Jews and Christians, etc.).

عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ

3. Laboring (hard in the worldly life by worshipping others besides Allah), weary (in the Hereafter with humility and disgrace).

تَصْلَى نَارًا حَامِيَةً

4. They will enter in the hot blazing Fire,

تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ آنِيَةٍ

5. They will be given to drink from a boiling spring,

لَّيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِن ضَرِيعٍ

6. No food will there be for them but a poisonous thorny plant,

لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِن جُوعٍ

7. Which will neither nourish nor avail against hunger.

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ

8. (Other) faces, that Day, will be joyful,

لِسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ

9. Glad with their endeavor (for their good deeds which they did in this world, along with the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism).

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ

10. In a lofty Paradise.

لَّا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَاغِيَةً

11. Where they shall neither hear harmful speech nor falsehood,

فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ

12. Therein will be a running spring,

فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ
13. Therein will be thrones raised high,

وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ
14. And cups set at hand.

وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ
15. And cushions set in rows,

وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ
16. And rich carpets (all) spread out.

أَفَلَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ
17. Do they not look at the camels, how they are created?

وَإِلَى السَّمَاء كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ
18. And at the heaven, how it is raised?

وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ
19. And at the mountains, how they are rooted and fixed firm?

وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ
20. And at the earth, how it is spread out?

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ
21. So remind them (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), you are only a one who reminds.

لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ
22. You are not a dictator over them.

إِلَّا مَن تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ
23. Save the one who turns away and disbelieves

فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ
24. Then Allah will punish him with the greatest punishment.

إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ
25. Verily, to Us will be their return;

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ
26. Then verily, for Us will be their reckoning.

The Backdrop

Since the Arabs were desert travelers, this surah and its message should have resonated especially with those who while traveling reflected upon Allah's signs. For if he, the desert traveler were to look in every direction, then he would see the signs of Allah's existence and mercy. These travelers understood the creations of Allah, and the order of things. Consequently, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was simply a reminder to them.

Hadith Reference:

It is reported on the authority of Anas b. Malik that he said: We were forbidden that we should ask anything (without genuine need) from the Holy Prophet. It, therefore, pleased us that an intelligent person from the dwellers of the desert should come and ask him (the Prophet) and we should listen to it. A man from the dwellers of the desert came (to the Prophet) and said: Muhammad, your messenger came to us and told us your assertion that verily Allah had sent you (as a prophet). He (the Prophet) remarked: He told the truth. He (the bedouin) said: Who created the heaven? He (the Prophet) replied: Allah. He (the bedouin again) said: Who created the earth? He (the Prophet) replied: Allah. He (the bedouin again) said: Who raised these mountains and who created in them whatever is created there? He (the Holy Prophet) replied: Allah. Upon this he (the bedouin) remarked: By Him Who created the heaven and created the earth and raised mountains thereupon, has Allah (in fact) sent you? He (the Prophet) said: Yes. He (the bedouin) said: Your messenger also told us that five prayers (had been made) obligatory for us during the day and the night. He (the Prophet) remarked: He told you the truth. He (the bedouin) said: By Him Who sent you, is it Allah Who ordered you about this (i. e. prayers)? He (the Prophet) said: Yes. He (the bedouin) said: Your messenger told us that Zakat had been made obligatory in our riches. He (the Prophet) said. He has told the truth. He (the bedouin) said: By Him Who sent you (as a prophet), is it Allah Who ordered you about it (Zakat)? He (the Prophet) said: Yes. He (the bedouin) said: Your messenger told us that it had been made obligatory for us to fast every year during the month of Ramadan. He (the Prophet) said: He has told the truth. He (the bedouin) said: By Him Who sent you (as a prophet), is it Allah Who ordered you about it (the fasts of Ramadan)? He (the Holy Prophet) said: Yes. He (the bedouin) said: Your messenger also told us that pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House (of Ka'bah) had been made obligatory for him who is able to undertake the journey to it. He (the Holy Prophet) said: Yes. The narrator said that he (the bedouin) set off (at the conclusion of this answer, but at the time of his departure) remarked: 'By Him Who sent you with the Truth, I would neither make any addition to them nor would I diminish anything out of them. Upon this the Holy Prophet remarked: If he were true (to what he said) he must enter Paradise. (Muslim)

☑ Word-for-Word

الْغَاشِيَة Al-Ghaashiyah (verse 1) – overwhelming calamity; another name for the Day of Resurrection
آنِيَة Aaneeyah (verse 5) – boiling, scalding water
ضَرِيع Dharee' (verse 6) – poisonous, thorny plant
نَّاعِمَة Naa'imah (verse 8) – soft, joyous, blissful
نُصِبَتْ Nusibat (verse 19) – fixed, rooted like pegs
كَفَر Kafar (verse 23) – turn away, cover
إِيَابَهُم Iyabahum (verse 25) – their return

€Notable Points

The overwhelming event of Resurrection

Has the news of Al Ghaashiyah come to you?

Some faces will be disgraced and humiliated on the Day of Judgment.
It is the kind of face that is weary (as if not having slept). Yet, there is never an opportunity to rest in the Hellfire.

There is a boiling spring from which they will be given a boiling drink. The thirst and hunger will be the equivalent to their punishment of Hellfire. There will be no food for them except from a thorny plant. This plant will be so painful that it could make the stomach explode because of its thorns, and it is also poisonous. Yet they will not die. This plant will neither nourish nor satisfy them. They will never get used to the punishment.

The reward of the Faithful

Other faces on that day will be joyful and they will be happy that they made the decision to live their lives on the path that Allah clearly favors. Allah is showing us that it will be a beautiful paradise, where they will never hear harmful speech.

There will be a running spring there, and thrones raised high, and cups set in hands and cushions set in rows and carpets spread out.

Open your eyes and look

Don't they see the camels, how are they created? Won't they look at them?

> The camel is a very gentle, humble animal despite its size. One hundred camels can be lead by a small child. Yet, it is a known fact that the camel is very intelligent, it has

an impeccable memory and often exacts revenge long after an incidence of mistreatment. The camel is also patient, lasting for days and days without food or drink. Allah has equipped it with a storage system that enables it to endure the weight of heavy loads and long treks through the desert. There is wisdom in Allah's creation, and He wants us to visualize it and learn from it.

Allah is giving us proof's of His existence. He asks if we have seen the heaven, how it is raised? And at the mountains, how they are rooted and fixed firm? And at the earth, how it is flat, outspread? Don't they see these creations of Allah that lie before their eyes each day?

Pass on this message

So remind them, you are only one who reminds. You are not a dictator over them.

So often we hold back the message of Islam from people that make us feel intimidated. We struggle long and hard to bring ourselves to just remind them of the oneness of our Creator. All we have to do is tell them. The rest is their choice and by Allah's decree.

As for the one who turns away and disbelieves, Allah will punish him with the greatest punishment. Verily, to Allah will be their return. Then verily, for Allah will be their reckoning.

Gems to Remember

- If you have a gathering that is free of false and idle talk, stop for a moment and cherish the moment. It is a glimpse of the nature of gatherings in Jannah.

- Whatever condition the Muslim finds himself in here on earth, it is nothing compared to the Hereafter. Likewise, whatever condition the disbeliever finds himself in, he is in paradise compared to the home that awaits him.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Ghaashiyah

1. Give a full definition of 'Dharee'". Be reminded that this is what the people of hellfire will consume.

2. We are encouraged to simply remind the people of their duties to Allah and He will call them into account. How does one practice this while giving dawah? Basically how does the Caller to Islam know when someone is sufficiently reminded, or does the reminding never stop. Substantiate your answer.

3. When we think of Al-Jannah many of us think of floating angels, and people in white robes drifting in clouds. Is this truly what life in Paradise is like, or is it somewhat similar to life on earth? Compare and contrast the two (the first life and the next). Use hadith especially to support your answer.

Suratul Naba'

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءلُونَ
1. What are they asking (one another)?

عَنِ النَّبَإِ الْعَظِيمِ
2. About the great news, (i.e. Islamic Monotheism, the Qur'an, which Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم brought and the Day of Resurrection, etc.),

الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ
3. About which they are in disagreement.

كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ
4. Nay, they will come to know!

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ
5. Nay, again, they will come to know!

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَادًا
6. Have We not made the earth as a bed,

وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا
7. And the mountains as pegs?

وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا
8. And We have created you in pairs (male and female, tall and short, good and bad, etc.).

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا
9. And have made your sleep as a thing for rest.

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا
10. And have made the night as a covering (through its darkness),

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا
11. And have made the day for livelihood.

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا
12. And We have built above you seven strong (heavens),

وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا
13. And have made (therein) a shinning lamp (sun).

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاء ثَجَّاجًا
14. And have sent down from the rainy clouds abundant water.

لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا
15. That We may produce therewith corn and vegetations,

وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا
16. And gardens of thick growth.

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا
17. Verily, the Day of Decision is a fixed time,

يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا
18. The Day when the Trumpet will be blown, and you shall come forth in crowds (groups);

وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَاء فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا
19. And the heaven shall be opened, and it will become as gates,

وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا
20. And the mountains shall be moved away from their places and they will be as if they were a mirage.

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا
21. Truly, Hell is a place of ambush,

لِلْطَّاغِينَ مَآبًا
22. A dwelling place for the Taghun (those who transgress the boundry limits set by Allah like polytheists, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, hyprocrites, sinners, criminals, etc.),

لَابِثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا
23. They will abide therein for ages,

لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا
24. Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink.

إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَّاقًا
25. Except boiling water, and dirty wound discharges.

جَزَاء وِفَاقًا
26. An exact recompense (according to their evil crimes).

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا

27. For verily, they used not to look for a reckoning.

وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كِذَّابًا

28. But they belied Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, and that which Our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought) completely.

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا

29. And all things We have recorded in a Book.

فَذُوقُوا فَلَن نَّزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا

30. So taste you (the results of your evil actions); no increase shall We give you, except in torment.

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا

31. Verily, for the Muttaqun, there will be a success (Paradise);

حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا

32. Gardens and grapeyards;

وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا

33. And young full-breasted (mature) maidens of equal age;

وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا

34. And a full cup (of wine).

لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذَّابًا

35. No Laghw (dirty, false, evil talk) shall they hear therein, nor lying;

جَزَاء مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَاء حِسَابًا

36. A reward from your Lord, an ample calculated gift (according to the best of their good deeds).

رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرحْمَنِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا

37. (From) the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and whatsoever is in between them, the Most Beneficent, none can dare to speak with Him (on the Day of Resurrection except after His Leave).

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا

38. The Day that Ar-Ruh [Jibrael (Gabriel) or another angel] and the angels will stand forth in rows, none shall speak except him whom the Most Beneficent (Allah) allows, and he will speak what is right.

ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَن شَاء اتَّخَذَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ مَآبًا
39. That is without doubt the True Day, so, whosoever wills, let him seek a place with (or a way to) His Lord (by obeying Him in this worldly life)!

إِنَّا أَنذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنتُ تُرَابًا
40. Verily, We have warned you of a near torment, the Day when man will see that (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the disbeliever will say: "Woe to me! Would that I were dust!"

⮠ The Backdrop

When the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) called the people of Makkah to Tawhid, he recited the Qur'an and told them about the resurrection after death. The people then went around asking amongst themselves, "Is what Muhammad claiming true?" They wondered if it was possible for them to be brought to life after their bodies have been cut up and lifeless. This was done to ridicule the message of Islam.

☑ Word-for-Word

عَمّ 'Amma (verse 1) – about what?
سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجً Sirajan wahhaajan (verse 13) – the sun has light itself and gives light to other things
يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ Yawm ul Fasl (verse 17) – another name for the day of Resurrection. A divider between the people
أَحْقَابً Ahqaab (verse 23) – undisclosed span of time
غَسَّاقً Ghassaaq (verse 25) – the liquid from flesh, vomit and pus
حِسَابً Hisaab (verse 27) – reckoning
كذّابا Kiththaaba (verse 28) – disbelieve in the signs again and again

€Notable Points

The often-debated issue of life in the Hereafter

What are they asking (as if appalled that they would have the audacity to question it)?

> This (the Day of Judgment) is not a simple matter that they should have some doubt about it. It is only the biggest and greatest news to ever come. This Day about which they are in disagreement, they will come to know, again, they will come to know!

Examples of Allah's All-Encompassing Power

Have we not made the earth as a bed?

> The earth is flat such that it can be built upon. If Allah wished, He could move the earth such that our homes would have to be rebuilt again and again.

Have we not made the mountains as pegs?

> The mountains are like pegs, which keep the earth firm and prevent earthquakes and inner movements within the earth.

And we have created you in pairs.

> While we are all from the same source (dirt) and are created from the same father, we are many different colors, shades and likenesses.

And We have made your sleep as a thing for rest.

> How would it be if we did not sleep? A person cannot function, and can die from lack of sleep, just as they could from lack of food.

And have made the night as a covering through its darkness, and have made the day for livelihood.

And We have built above you seven strong heavens.

> Unlike the coverings that we attach to our homes, the skies are not attached, there are no pillars. We should take special notice of the celestial objects, for Allah continually swears by them.

And We have made a shining lamp, and We have sent down from the rainy clouds abundant water. That We may produce therewith corn and vegetations, and gardens of thick growth.

The Day of Assembly and Life Hereafter

The Day of Decision is a fixed time. There will be no delaying it, nor postponing. That Day when the Trumpet will be blown and you will come forth in crowds (groups after groups).

And the heaven shall be opened, and it will become as gates, and the mountains shall be moved away from their places and they will appear as a mirage. Allah brings the mountains to our attention, then details the fact that they will be moved, as though they were never there.

Hellfire and what lies in wait

Hell is truly a place of ambush (i.e. as if it is a living, breathing being). A dwelling place for those who transgress the boundary limits set by Allah.
They will live there for ages. They will not drink nor taste anything except boiling water and the discharges from their wounds. Yet, all of this is an exact recompense for their evil crimes. They disregarded the reckoning even when they were reminded they still continually ignored the signs.

No increase will we give you except in torment.

> Each time the inhabitants of Hell will ask for the punishment to be lifted, a more painful and severe punishment will befall them.

Paradise and what lies in wait

For the ones who are Allah-fearing there will be success. The success will include gardens and vineyards, and young full-breasted maidens of equal age, and a full cup of wine. There will also be no dirty, foul and evil talk there in Paradise. It is a reward from your Lord, and an ample, calculated gift.

While we recognize the things that Allah has promised us by their names, there is nothing comparable in this world to that which is available in Paradise. Allah's blessings to the people of Jannah will come in many forms and will be pleasing for all pleasure senses.

The word of the day of Resurrection

The success given to the pious will come from the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth and whatever is between them.

Gems to Remember

If you ever try to tell a disbeliever about Islam and each time they reject you, make mockery of your words, and the admonishments you give, then you will understand (verse 28) the severity of the their actions.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Naba

1. What is the great news referred to in Suratul Naba?

2. Allah gives several evidences of His beneficence in Suratul Naba, what is the main message of this surah?

3. What will be the supreme achievement for the righteous in the Hereafter?

Suratul Naazi'aat:

وَالنَّازِعَاتِ غَرْقًا
1. By those (angels) who pull out (the souls of the disbelievers and the wicked) with great violence.

وَالنَّاشِطَاتِ نَشْطًا
2. By those (angels) who gently take out (the souls of the believers).

وَالسَّابِحَاتِ سَبْحًا
3. And by those that swim along (i.e. angels or planets in their orbits, etc.).

فَالسَّابِقَاتِ سَبْقًا
4. And by those that press forward as in a race (i.e. the angels or stars or the horses, etc.).

فَالْمُدَبِّرَاتِ أَمْرًا
5. And by those angels who arrange to do the Commands of their Lord, (so verily, you disbelievers will be called to account).

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ
6. On the Day (when the first blowing of the Trumpet is blown), the earth and the mountains will shake violently (and everybody will die).

تَتْبَعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ
7. The second blowing of the Trumpet follows it (and everybody will be resurrected).

قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ
8. (Some) hearts that Day will shake with fear and anxiety.

أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ
9. Their eyes will be downcast.

يَقُولُونَ أَئِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ
10. They say: Shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state of life?

أَئِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا نَّخِرَةً
11. Even after we are crumbled bones?

قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذًا كَرَّةٌ خَاسِرَةٌ
12. They say: it would in that case, be a return with loss!

فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ
13. But it will be only a single Zajrah (shout (i.e., the second blowing of the Trumpet)),

فَإِذَا هُم بِالسَّاهِرَةِ
14. When behold, they find themselves on the surface of the earth alive after their death,

هَلْ أتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَى
15. Has there come to you the story of Musa (Moses)?

إِذْ نَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى
16. When his Lord called him in the sacred valley of Tuwa,

اذْهَبْ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَى
17. Go to Fir'awn (Pharaoh); verily he has transgressed all bounds (in crimes, sins, polytheism, disbelief, etc.).

فَقُلْ هَل لَّكَ إِلَى أَن تَزَكَّى
18. And say to him: Would you purify yourself (from the sin of disbelief by becoming a believer)?

وَأَهْدِيَكَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَى
19. And that I guide you to your Lord, so you should fear Him?

فَأَرَاهُ الْآيَةَ الْكُبْرَى
20. Then (Musa (Moses)) showed him the great sign (miracles).

فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصَى
21. But (Fir'awn (Pharaoh)) belied and disobeyed.

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ يَسْعَى
22. Then he turned his back, striving (against Allah).

فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَى
23. Then he gathered (his people) and cried aloud,

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى
24. Saying: I am your lord, most high.

فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَى
25. So Allah, seized him with punishment for his last (i.e. his saying: i am your lord, most high) and first (i.e. his saying, O chiefs! I know not that you have a god other than I) transgression.

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَى
26. Verily in this is an instructive admonition for whosoever fears Allah.

أَأَنتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمِ السَّمَاء بَنَاهَا
27. Are you more difficult to create or is the heaven that He constructed?

رَفَعَ سَمْكَهَا فَسَوَّاهَا
28. He raised its height, and has perfected it.

وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَاهَا
29. Its night He covers with darkness and its forenoon He brings out (with light).

وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَاهَا
30. And after that He spread the earth,

أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَاءهَا وَمَرْعَاهَا
31. And brought forth therefrom its water and its pasture.

وَالْجِبَالَ أَرْسَاهَا
32. And the mountains He has fixed firmly,

مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ
33. (To be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle.

فَإِذَا جَاءتِ الطَّامَّةُ الْكُبْرَى
34. But when there comes the greatest catastrophe (i.e. the Day of Recompense).

يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنسَانُ مَا سَعَى
35. The Day when man shall remember what he strove for.

وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَن يَرَى
36. And Hell-Fire shall be made apparent in full view for (every) one who sees.

فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَى
37. Then for him who Tagha (transgressed all bounds, in disbelief, oppression and evil deeds of disobedience to Allah).

وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
38. And preferred the life of this world (by following his evil desires and lusts),

فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى
39. Verily his abode will be Hell-Fire;

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى
40. But as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires, and lusts.

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى
41. Verily Paradise will be his abode.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا
42. They ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) about the Hour, when will be its appointed time?

فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكْرَاهَا
43. You have no knowledge to say anything about it.

إِلَى رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَاهَا
44. To your Lord belongs (the knowledge of) the term thereof?

إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرُ مَن يَخْشَاهَا
45. You (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are only a warner for those who fear it,

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا
46. The Day they see it, (it will be) as if they had not tarried (in this world) except an afternoon or a morning.

Who's Who

Fir'awn	(See Suratul Fajr)
Musa	(See Suratul A'laa)
Tuwa	a sacred valley, below the Mount of Sinai, a sacred Mount in the eyes of Allah. The valley Tuwa is also sacred, such that the Prophet Musa was commanded to remove his shoes while there. The valley of Tuwa Is also where the the Torah was revealed.

☑ Word-for-Word

غَرْقًا Gharqaa (verse 1) – to violently pull out (i.e. like a tree yanked out with deep roots)
نَشْطًا Nashtaa (verse 2) – pull out gently; opposite of gharqaa.
الرَّاجِفَةُ Al-Raajifah (verse 6) – first blowing of the trumpet, which will convulse the earth and everything will die
الرَّادِفَةُ Al-Raadifah (verse 7) – second blowing of the trumpet, which will resurrect everything

زَجْرَةٌ Zajrah (verse 13) - scream
الطَّامَّة Al Taammah (verse 34) – another name for Judgment Day; called this because it is the Catastrophe that will overcome all catastrophes

€Notable Points

Angels – The soul extractors

There are five types of Angels, which Allah testifies by in this surah. Testifying by them shows their high status to Allah and alludes to their enormous creation and power (that He has given to them).

He swears by those who extract with violence and those who extract with ease.

> This refers to the Angels of torment and of mercy who will take out the soul of the human at the time of death. The death and the manner with which the angels take out the soul is always befitting of the person and the lives they lived. Some people will be humiliated with the removal of their soul, while others honored.

By those who glide as if swimming (i.e. Angels moving quickly to execute His commands or planets in their orbits)

By those that press forward as if in a race.

> This could refer to those Angels who race to deliver the souls to Allah (Subhana wa t'ala), and who are anxious to deliver the Believing souls to paradise for glad tidings and bliss from their life's toil.

Finally, by those Angels that arrange to do the command of their Lord, according to His decree.

> This may refer to the angels that are responsible for the implementation of Allah's commands for affairs of this world such as the wind, rains, provisions, earthquakes and floods.
>
> Allah is swearing by the Angels that the Disbelievers will be accountable. The resurrection is the truth, the Hour will come and nothing can stop it. This appears in brackets in most translations, as it is a hidden "Maqsoom 'Ilayhi".

The end of those who chose disbelief

On the day of the blast of the trumpet, which will be so horrific in sound and effect that everything will convulse and tremble when they hear it, and every living thing will die (including the Angel that has blown it). Afterwards there will be another blowing, with which everything will come back to life.

The hearts of those who denied the Resurrection will quiver that Day with fear and anxiety. Their eyes will be humbled, downcast.

Now in this life they say, (something similar to) "Will we really be returned to our former state (living), even after our bones have crumbled?" They mock and make light of the affair of the overwhelming day. Sarcastically they say, "If so, that would be a return with loss!"

In reality, it will only take one single shout that they will hear in the belly of their graves, and behold they will find themselves on the plains of the Day of Judgment. All of humanity will be there – from Adam to the very last soul. Every person will live again after death.

> Cross Reference:
> Suratul Ibrahim verse 48
>
> يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُواْ للّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ
>
> On the Day when the earth will be changed to another earth and so will be the heavens, and they (all creatures) will appear before Allah, the One, the Irresistible.

The story of Fir'awn and his Tyranny

Have you heard the story of Musa (عليه سلم)?

> This is an attention-grabber, making the reader want to know what happened.
>
> Allah said to Musa "Go to Fir'awn. Indeed he has transgressed." Fir'awn had transgressed all bounds in sin, polytheism and disbelief. Musa (عليه سلم) was to ask Fir'awn if he would like to purify himself. Musa (عليه سلم) encouraged him to purify his soul.
>
> Fir'awn had no Iman (faith) and was not Allah-conscious so Musa (عليه سلم) was to help guide him to his Lord so that he could come to fear Him.
>
> When people commit sins and heinous crimes, the core issue is that their soul is starved and sick. Their relationship with Allah is so weak that they need a deep cleaning - "soul-cleansing". When Allah instructed Musa (عليه سلم) to go to Fir'aun He addressed the core issue. Fir'aun needed purification so the transgressions (e.g. enslavement, murder) would cease.
>
> The words and manner with which the Prophet Musa (عليه سلم) was to approach Fir'aun makes a clear point about spreading the message of Islam. Allah did not instruct him to be harsh, call him the Kafir that he was, nor approach him angrily even though he was the worst of people. Musa (عليه سلم) was simply to ask him a question - "Do you want to be purified?"
>
> If this is the way to approach the wretched Disbeliever, how much more gentle and kind must we be to our fellow Muslim? This incident also shows us that even if we

think that someone will not accept the message (which Allah of course knew before sending Musa (عليه سلم)) our responsibility is still to deliver the truth.

Musa (عليه سلم) offered to give Fir'awn knowledge about how to purify himself and become pious. This shows us that knowledge comes before true fear of Allah.

Then Musa (عليه سلم) showed Fir'awn the greatest of signs when he threw down the staff and it turned into a snake. Fir'awn turned his back (i.e. shocked and fearful), plotted and finally gathered the people to announce, "I am your most exalted lord". He feared for his kingdom, and because of this, he committed the worst of all crimes.

So Allah seized him with an exemplary punishment, punishing him for his transgressions (e.g. the maltreatment of his citizenry and claiming to be god). Truly, Fir'awn's story is a lesson for whoever would fear Allah.

The people of Makkah and their tyranny

Allah is asking a humiliating question to belittle the arrogant tyrants (e.g. Makkans). Are you more difficult to create than the heavens that He has constructed by raising its height and perfecting it?

He covers the night of the heavens with darkness and the day (forenoon) is brought out with light. After this, He spread the earth and brought out of it the pastures and water, and the mountains fixed firmly. He has done this for you – to be a provision for you and your cattle.

The end of the Believers versus the Disbelievers

When there comes the greatest Overwhelming Calamity, the Day, when everyone will remember what they strived for in this life.

> There are two camps, no middle ground. Hellfire will be apparent in full view for everyone to see. As for the one who transgressed and preferred this life (even to his own destruction), his abode will be Hellfire. As for those who feared standing before their Lord, and restrained themselves from evil, certainly Paradise will be their place.
>
> Allah gives us chances to repent and cease wrong actions. Yet, He does not forget tyranny. When the time comes, for those who have not repented, the snatching will be horrific.

When will all this happen?

Though they asked the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (and still ask today) about when the hour would come, he had no knowledge of this to say.

The knowledge of this belongs only to Allah. The Prophet was only to warn and help prepare the ones who fear it. The day they see it, it will be as if their entire lives was like a morning or an afternoon.

Gems to Remember

- The next time you go to commit an action that is not befitting a Believer (i.e. lying, cheating), think of the fact that the Angel is drawing his breath to blow the trumpet – NOW!

- Revisit a time when you have had a near-miss with death or been afraid of some other impending danger. Recapture the feeling that you felt when the moment it occurred. Did you heart seem to shake, and move abnormally during the event and sometime after? This is just a small taste of the feeling mentioning in this surah.

- Living Islamically does not only mean desisting from the things that you dislike. A person must restrain themselves from things that they desire and want as well. The Muslim does not commit haram actions because Allah wants it that way.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Naazi'aat

1. The lesser judgment is coming, and we must be prepared. Allah has reminded us of it continually in Juz 'Amma. Descirbe briefly the things that will occur when we die (and are dying, and after we are dead (until the Day of Judgment)). Support your discussion with citations from Qur'an and hadith.

2. Allah swears by the time in Suratul 'Asr, raising its status and importance. We as humans also know the value of time and its role in our life (as discussed in an earlier assignment). Despite this, with Allah there is a "timelessness" that has no comparison to our concept of the ticking clock and moving hands. Cite examples from Quran and hadith that support the notion that Allah's time (and that of the hereafter) is not like our time.

3. The hour and the exact date for the end of the earth is not known to anyone, in the heavens or on earth. Imagine for a moment how the world would be if this information was revealed to us, without changing the accountability factor. Would it change the state of the world and the actions of people? How do you think it would be to know that the world would end 100 years, 3 months and 5 days from now at 8:00 a.m.? Would that knowledge change you and your actions? Explain your responses.

Extension Exercise - 6

Visit or Witness the Dead

Make an effort to wash the body of a Muslim and/or visit a grave with the intention of being reminded of death. You will soon know what it is to be dead, perhaps it will benefit you to witness someone for whom the lesser judgement has begun.

Write a brief report of your fresh thoughts about this experience.

Suratul Infitaar

إِذَا السَّمَاء انفَطَرَتْ
1. When the heaven is cleft asunder.

وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انتَثَرَتْ
2. And when the stars have fallen and scattered;

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ
3. And when the seas are burst forth (got dried up);

وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ
4. And when the graves are turned upside down (and they bring out their contents)

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ
5. (Then) a person will know what he has sent forward and (what he has) left behind (of good or bad deeds).

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيم
6. O man! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Most Generous?

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ
7. Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion;

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاء رَكَّبَكَ
8. In whatever form He willed, He put you together.

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِالدِّين
9. Nay! But you deny the Recompense (reward for good deeds and punishment for evil deeds).

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ
10. But verily, over you (are appointed angels in charge of mankind) to watch you,

كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ
11. Kiraaman (honourable) Kaatibeen writing down (your deeds),

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُون
12. They know all that you do.

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ
13. Verily, the Abraar (pious and righteous) will be in delight (Paradise);

وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ
14. And verily, the Fujjaar (the wicked, disbelievers, sinners and evil-doers) will be in the blazing Fire (Hell),

يَصْلَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ
15. In which they will enter, and taste its burning flame on the Day of Recompense,

وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَائِبِينَ
16. And they (Al-Fujjaar) will not be absent therefrom (i.e. will not go out from the Hell).

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ
17. And what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is?

ثُمَّ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ
18. Again, what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is?

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ
19. (It will be) the Day when no person shall have power (to do) anything for another, and the Decision, that Day, will be (wholly) with Allah.

☑ Word-for-Word

كِرَامًا Kiraaman (verse 11) – honorable, noble, esteemed
كَاتِبِين Kaatibin (verse 11) – recording, writing down (e.g. each person's deeds)

€Notable Points

The Apocalypse

When the sky (heaven) breaks apart and the stars fall, scattering and when the seas are erupted and the contents of the graves are exposed (as they are turned upside down) –

Then a person will know what he has sent forth for himself (for the second life) and what he has left behind.

The ungratefulness of man and his arrogance to his Creator

What has made you so careless about your Lord, the Most Generous who created and fashioned you perfectly (balanced), and gave you due proportion. In whatever form He willed He has assembled you.

The cause of this arrogance

No, but you deny Ad-Din (i.e. the Day of Recompense). But verily, over you are Angels who are in charge to watch you. They are keepers Noble and Recording. They know everything that you do.

Humanity divided into two camps

Truly, the pious and righteous will be in Delight. Truly the wicked will be in the blazing Fire. They will enter it and taste its burning flames on the Day of Recompense.

The enormity of the final day

And what will make you know what they Day of Recompense is? Again, what will make you know what this day is? How can anything make you understand this day?

This is a warning to take heed, as no one will be able to carry the sins of another. No one will have power over another person. The decision on that Day will be solely with Allah.

Gems to Remember

- We must never forget that the Scribes (Recording Angels) are writing whatever we do. If you discovered right now that there were cameras installed in every room of your house, and people were watching everything you did – how would you feel? If you knew that the people who record your every action will submit the evidence to a judge who may sentence you to life imprisonment, what would you change?

- Whatever form, shape or condition we find ourselves in, we should remember that this is the way that Allah made us, and we are well-made.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Infitaar

1. In verse 5 of Suratul Infitaar, Allah mentions "sent forward and kept back", consult accepted tafseer sources to find what is meant by these words.

4. Name actions that the Believer must commit for want of Allah's pleasure.

3. Name some actions that the Believer must omit for fear of Allah's wrath.

Extension Exercise – 7

Angels

Within Juz 'Amma, there are several mentions of the various angels that Allah has created. It is worth noting their nature, purpose and duties as decreed by Allah.

Study the angels and answer the following questions, citing your sources of information:

- Name the known angels (i.e. the ones for whom we are given names and information) and their duties or responsibilities.

- How should the human regard angels, and what are some common misconceptions about them.

- Explain in detail the overall purpose of their creation.

- Identify the key characteristics of angels and what lessons we might learn from them (i.e. their nature). This can be done easily by researching what we know that they have said. Their speech will indicate a great deal about them.

- How do the fact that they angels are created benefit humans

Suratul Inshiqaaq

إِذَا السَّمَاء انشَقَّتْ

1. When the heaven is split asunder,

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

2. And listens and obeys its Lord, and it must do so;

وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ

3. And when the earth is stretched forth,

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ

4. And has cast out all that was in it and became empty,

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

5. And listens and obeys its Lord, and it must do so;

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلَاقِيهِ

6. O man! Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions (good or bad), a sure returning, so you will meet (i.e. the results of your deeds which you did).

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ

7. Then, as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand,

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا

8. He surely will receive an easy reckoning,

وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا

9. And will return to his family in joy!

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاء ظَهْرِهِ

10. But whosoever is given his Record behind his back,

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُورًا

11. He will invoke (his) destruction,

وَيَصْلَى سَعِيرًا

12. And shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning.

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا

13. Verily, he was among his people in joy!

إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَن لَّن يَحُورَ
14. Verily, he thought that he would never come back (to Us)!

بَلَى إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا
15. Yes! Verily, his Lord has been ever beholding him!

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ
16. So I swear by the afterglow of sunset;

وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ
17. And by the night and whatever it gathers in its darkness;

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ
18. And by the moon when it is at the full,

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ
19. You shall certainly travel from stage to stage (in this life and in the Hereafter).

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
20. What is the matter with them, that they believe not?

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ
21. And when the Qur'an is recited to them, they fall not prostrate,

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يُكَذِّبُونَ
22. Nay, (on the contrary), those who disbelieve, belie (Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and whatever he brought, i.e. this Qur'an and Islamic Monotheism, etc.).

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ
23. And Allah knows best what they gather (of good and bad deeds),

فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ
24. So announce to them a painful torment.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ
25. Save those who believe and do righteous good deeds, for them is a reward that will never come to an end (i.e. Paradise).

☑ Word-for-Word

إِذَا Idha (verse 1) – means "if" however the translation "when" is used; the completion of this construction is dropped.(i.e. there is no immediate mention of the results (the "then") of the condition implied)
أَذِنَتْ Adhinat (verse 2) - give permission
كَدْحًا Kad-han (verse 6) – exerting, working hard and fast
ثُبُورًا Thubooraa (verse 11) – destruction and punishment (e.g. he shall calls it upon himself)

€Notable Points

The Apocalypse

When the sky is split and rips open from the horror of this day.

> ? Suratul Furqan, verse 25
>
> وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ السَّمَاء بِالْغَمَامِ وَنُزِّلَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَنزِيلًا
>
> This day the heavens will split and rip open and armies and armies of angels will descend.
>
> The if/then construction is used with "If the heaven is split asunder" (literal translation). However, these events will surely happen, such that the best translation is "when". The thing that will happen, to complete the if/then construction is unstated. Basically the human will meet hardship and horror of a kind that they have never met before, nor have ever imagined.

It (the sky) will listen to and obey its Lord, as it must do. The earth will be stretched forth and cast out everything in it.

> All of the graves and treasures of the earth will be aborted. The characterization of this abortion (contents of the earth cast out) shows the horrific nature of this day.

Everything will be destroyed. There will remain no mountains, nor buildings, everything will be flat.

The earth will listen and obey its Lord – and it must do so. It will become an earth that is unlike the one we know.

> Verses 2 and 5 personify the heaven and the earth like living, breathing servants of Allah, (e.g. they listen and obey) there is no other choice.

Humanity and their hard work, the good side

O mankind! You are working and working but all of your toil will end up at Allah. With the blink of an eye you will be before your Lord and He will repay you for what you did. This is a sure returning. You will see the results of the deeds that you did.

Then as for the one who is given his book in his right hand (i.e. it will appear there), they will receive an easy reckoning, and will return to his family in joy! There will be no harshness in this recounting. Having the book in the right hand is a universal symbol of happiness.

> Hadith Reference:
>
> Suhaib reported the Apostle (may peace be upon him) saying: When those deserving of Paradise would enter Paradise, the Blessed and the Exalted would ask: Do you wish Me to give you anything more? They would say: Hast Thou not brightened our faces? Hast Thou not made us enter Paradise and saved us from Fire? He (the narrator) said: He (God) would lift the veil, and of things given to them nothing would he dearer to them than the sight of their Lord, the Mighty and the Glorious. (Muslim)

Humanity and their handiwork, the dark side

But whosoever is given his record behind his back, he will invoke his destruction, will enter a blazing Fire, and be made to taste its burning.

> Cross Reference:
> Suratul Furqan verse 12-14:
>
> إِذَا رَأَتْهُم مِّن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغَيُّظًا وَزَفِيرًا
>
> 12. When it (Hell) sees them from a far place, they will hear its raging and its roaring.
>
> وَإِذَا أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا
>
> 13. And when they shall be thrown into a narrow place thereof, chained together, they will exclaim therein for destruction.
>
> لَا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَادْعُوا ثُبُورًا كَثِيراً
>
> 14. Exclaim not today for one destruction, but exclaim for many destructions.

The wicked person who is given his book behind his back will curse himself and have the ultimate sadness since he caused his own destruction. Once his questioning begins and he has to answer why he committed the evil actions, he will have no excuses and will be destroyed.

Receiving one's book behind the back and in the left hand is the universal symbol for unhappiness.

Truly, he was among his people in joy and truly he thought that he would never come back to Allah.

Yes. Certainly his Lord has been ever watching him.

When we do things behind people's backs, sneaking because they are not watching, it is as if we are making Allah unimportant. As if it does not matter that He (Allah) is watching.

The Journey

So, I (Allah) swear by the afterglow of the sunset. And by the night and whatever it gathers in its darkness and by the moon when it becomes full. I swear that you will certainly go from state to state in this life and the hereafter.

This is a testification that comes in the middle of the surah. It winds us down from the information preceding.

The sunset turns from orange to red, and the moon changes from half to full, so shall we change from stage to stage in both of our lives (i.e. death, grave, resurrection, final abode).

The night gathers people into their homes, and for sleep, though they were spread out.

Cross Reference:
Suratul Naml ayah 86

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

See they not that We have made the night for them to rest therein, and the day sight-giving? Verily, in this are Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) for the people who believe.

The Disbelievers reproached and shamed

What is the matter with them that they do not prostrate when the Quran is recited?

No, the disbelievers knew that what the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم said was true inwardly, but they denied it outwardly. Allah knows best what they gather of good and bad deeds. So inform to them of a painful torment. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, for them is a reward that will never end.

Verse 22 uses a verb form for disbelief not a noun. It shows the hard-headedness of those who hide the truth, so as not to accept it.

Verse 24 says tell of the good news (as if sarcastically) of a painful punishment. They disbelieved at the same time that their inner selves were convinced, the complete reason for their disbelief is their injustice to themselves and arrogance.

One distinction between the disbelievers (Kuffar) and the Jews and Christians is that more often than not the People of the Book do what they believe out of misguided conviction.

Gems to Remember

- Every Muslim must learn the Arabic language. This beautiful, often elusive language is one of the lifelines that will enable us to understand what our Lord tells us in the Quran. We miss a great deal of depth and meaning when we depend on translations.

- The wicked will be fearful in the Hereafter, the righteous are fearful in this world.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Inshiqaaq

1. In verse 9 of Suratul Inshiqaaq, Allah speaks of "his people" what does this refer to? Does this mean that those nearest us in terms of our relatives and friends in this life, or does it mean the people who are in the same group with us (i.e. we are split into two groups)? Find accepted interpretations of this verse.

2. Read sources about the moon when it is full. What happens to it and how it appears while in this state is obvioiusly significant, as Allah calls it to witness. Draw comparisions from this with the life of humans.

3. Why do we prostrate to Allah?

Suratul Mutaffifeen

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ
1. Woe to Al-Mutaffifin [those who give less in measure and weight (decrease the rights of others)],

الَّذِينَ إِذَا اكْتَالُواْ عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ
2. Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, demand full measure,

وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَو وَّزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ
3. And when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due.

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ
4. Think they not that they will be resurrected (for reckoning),

لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ
5. On a Great Day,

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
6. The Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the 'Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)?

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينٍ
7. Nay! Truly, the Record (writing of the deeds) of the Fujjaar (disbelievers, sinners, evil-doers and wicked) is (preserved) in Sijjeen.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سِجِّينٌ
8. And what will make you know what Sijjeen is?

كِتَابٌ مَّرْقُومٌ
9. A Register inscribed.

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ
10. Woe, that Day, to those who deny [(Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Resurrection, and Al-Qadar (Divine Preordainments)].

الَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ
11. Those who deny the Day of Recompense.

وَمَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ
12. And none can deny it except every transgressor beyond bounds, (in disbelief, oppression and disobedience of Allah, the sinner!)

إِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ
13. When Our Verses (of the Qur'an) are recited to him he says: "Tales of the ancients!"

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ
14. Nay! But on their hearts is the Raan (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they used to earn.

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ
15. Nay! Surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.

ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ
16. Then, verily they will indeed enter and taste the burning flame of Hell.

ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ
17. Then, it will be said to them: "This is what you used to deny!"

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عِلِّيِّينَ
18. Nay! Verily, the Record (writing of the deeds) of Al-Abraar (the pious who fear Allah and avoid evil), is (preserved) in 'Illiyyoon.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ
19. And what will make you know what 'Illiyyoon is?

كِتَابٌ مَّرْقُومٌ
20. A Register inscribed.

يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ
21. To which bear witness those nearest (to Allah, i.e. the angels).

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ
22. Verily, Al-Abraar (the pious who fear Allah and avoid evil) will be in delight (Paradise).

عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنظُرُونَ
23. On thrones, looking (at all things).

تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ
24. You will recognize in their faces the brightness of delight.

يُسْقَوْنَ مِن رَّحِيقٍ مَّخْتُومٍ
25. They will be given to drink pure sealed wine.
26.

خِتَامُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ
26. The last thereof (that wine) will be the smell of musk, and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e. hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah).

وَمِزَاجُهُ مِن تَسْنِيمٍ
27. It (that wine) will be mixed with Tasneem.

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ
28. A spring whereof drink those nearest to Allah.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُواْ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ
29. Verily! (During the worldly life) those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed.

وَإِذَا مَرُّواْ بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ
30. And whenever they passed by them, used to wink one to another (in mockery);

وَإِذَا انقَلَبُواْ إِلَى أَهْلِهِمُ انقَلَبُواْ فَكِهِينَ
31. And when they returned to their own people, they would return jesting;

وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَؤُلَاء لَضَالُّونَ
32. And when they saw them, they said: "Verily! These have indeed gone astray!"

وَمَا أُرْسِلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَافِظِينَ
33. But they (disbelievers, sinners) had not been sent as watchers over them (the believers).

فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ
34. But this Day (the Day of Resurrection) those who believe will laugh at the disbelievers

عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنظُرُونَ
35. On (high) thrones, looking (at all things).

هَلْ ثُوِّبَ الْكُفَّارُ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ
36. Are not the disbelievers paid (fully) for what they used to do?

↵ The Backdrop

While some say this surah is Madini, it is actually one of the later Makkan surahs, revealed before the Hijrah to Madinah. The people in Madinah were often guilty of cheating when they used scales for business transactions. For example, they would weigh a commodity with rocks and other objects hidden amongst them to deceive the buyer and charge more than the product was worth.

With the guidance of the Quran and the example of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) the people of Madinah became the best and most honest in measurements and business transactions.

There was a man named An-Nadr ibn Al Haarith who was a storyteller. He would tell the people stories and compare himself to the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), suggesting that the Qur'an was not from Allah, but rather from the imagination.

An-Nadr's audience knew the difference between what he told and what the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did, and they soon became bored with him.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would encourage the weak Muslims by telling them that they would become like the kings of this world. The Disbelievers would mock them through the streets saying "O, Look! Here come the kings of the Earth."

☑ Word-for-Word

الْمُطَفِّفِين Al- Mutafiffeen (verse 1) – people in business who cheat and "short-change"
أَسَاطِيرُ Asaateeru (verse 13) – tall tales, a story which has no factual basis
عِلِّيِّينَ Illiyyeen (vese 18) – from the root "uluww" which means high
تَسْنِيمٍ Tasneem (verse 27) – high river in Jannah which begins in the highest heaven and streams down

€Notable Points

The curse of those who deal in business fraud

Allah curses the people who cheat when they measure. These people demand to receive the full amount, yet when they must pay, they cheat and take from the goods.

> This is the main sin for which the people of Suhaib (عليه السلام) were destroyed (e.g. cheating in the measurements). Allah promised that the society would become wretched because of this.
>
> Allah puts it upon Himself not to be unjust, and this is what He asks from us.

Do they not think that they will be resurrected for their own account on a Great Day? The Day when all of mankind will stand before their Lord, the Lord of all that exists.

> Standing in reverence is reserved for Allah.

The end of those who chose the evil path

Allah raises the status of the book (register) by saying "Truly, the Record of the Disbelievers is preserved."

> This could also mean that the names of these people are in the Sijjin a Register inscribed. It is written already (by the Decree of Allah).

The Fujjar deny the Day of Recompense, they are the only one who do, because they have crossed all bounds.

When the verses of the Quran are recited they say that they are fairytales. Their hearts are covered with rust and they will be prevented from seeing Allah on that Day. They will enter and taste the flames of Hell and be told, this is what you used to deny – now taste it.

The end of those who chose a righteous path

Surely the Record of the pious and righteous is preserved in the high and lofty register which is inscribed and witnessed to by those Angels who are closest to Allah. The pious will be in Delight.

They will be on thrones, looking and will be recognizable by the brightness and delight in their faces. They will be given a pure sealed wine mixed with Tasneem to drink and the last of the wine will smell of musk. For this reward, let everyone strive who wants to strive and hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah.

Who's laughing now?

The criminals laughed at the Believers and winked as they passed, and when they would return to their own people (i.e. go to their homes), they would return mocking and making fun. The Disbelievers said the Muslims had gone astray, but they were not watchers over them.

However, on this Day (Day of Resurrection), those who believe will be laughing on high thrones Are not the Disbelievers paid in full for what they used to do?

Gems to Remember

- Is your name recorded amongst the wicked in the Sijjin?

- How can someone ever think that Allah is unjust, when he has cursed and disgraced people who are unjust?

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Mutaffifeen

1. Allah encourages the righteousness to compete for His rewards, He wants is slaves to have rewards both in this life and the next. Identify and list some of the bounties (citing the source of Information) of the Hereafter, which are available for the taking by the pious.

2. Allah asks, and what will make you know what "sijjin" is in verse 8? Look for the accepted definitions and interpretations of this word. List them and take note of the implication therefore for the Disbeliever.

3. Contrast the definition of "sijjin" as answered above, with that of "illiyyin" in verse 18. As Allah says in verse 19, "And what will explain to you what "illiyin" is.

   How are these two (i.e. sijjin, illiyin) different, and how are they the same.

Suratul Zalzalah

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا
1. When the earth is shaken with its (final) earthquake.

وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا
2. And when the earth throws out its burdens,

وَقَالَ الْإِنسَانُ مَا لَهَا
3. And man will say: "What is the matter with it?"

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا
4. That Day it will declare its information (about all what happened over it of good or evil).

بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَى لَهَا
5. Because your Lord has inspired it.

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ
6. That Day mankind will proceed in scattered groups that they may be shown their deeds.

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ
7. So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it.

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ
8. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it.

The Backdrop

This is a Madani surah with a Makkan style.

☑ Word-for-Word

أَخْرَجَتِ Akhrajat (verse 2) – throws out

أَثْقَالَهَا Athqaalaha (verse 2) – from something heavy (i.e. treasure, rotten bones)
يَصْدُرُ Yasduru (verse 6) – leave
أَشْتَاتًا Ashtaatan (verse 6) – scattered groups, divided
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّة Mithqaal Dharrah (verse 7) – weight of a small ant or like dust particles remaining after the sand is touched

€Notable Points

The Apocalypse

The earth will shake with its final quake.

That Day…

The earth will throw out its burdens. It will push and/or kick out all of the treasures, the dead the diamonds – all of its heaviness.

Anything that stood up on the earth will be knocked down.

People will ask what the matter is. Allah will inspire the earth to speak and tell of good and evil that happened over it.

> Cross Reference:
> Surah Yaseen 65:
>
> الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَى أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ
>
> This Day, We shall seal up their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their legs will bear witness to what they used to earn. (It is said that one's left thigh will be the first to bear the witness).
>
> Hadith Reference:
>
> Anas b. Malik reported: We were in the company of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) that he smiled and said: Do you know why I laughed? We said: Allah and His Messenger know best. Thereupon he said: It was because of the (fact that there came to my mind the) talk which the servant would have with his Lord (on the Day of Judgment). He would say: My Lord, have you not guaranteed me protection against injustice? He would say: Yes. Then the servant would say: I do not deem valid any witness against me but my own self, and He would say: Well, enough would be the witness of your self against you and that of the two angels who had been appointed to record your deeds. Then the seal would be set upon his mouth and it would be said to his hands and feet to speak and they would speak of his deeds. Then the mouth would be made free to talk, he would say (to the bands and feet): Be

> away, let there be curse of Allah upon you. It was for your safety that I contended. (Muslim)

The moment of judgment

That Day mankind will proceed in scattered groups so that they may be shown their deeds and the rewards thereof.

> One opinion is that some people go to the gathering (of all beings) riding, with illuminated faces and beautiful dispositions. The Angels will call over them saying, "These are the beloved of Allah." Meanwhile others will be taken with darkened faces, barefoot with the chains and cuffs as the Angels call over them saying, "These are the enemies of Allah."

So whoever does good equal to the weight of an atom shall see it, and whoever does evil which is equal to the weight of an atom will see it.

✍Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Zalzalah

1. The punishments of Allah are generally for Disbelievers and / or rejectors of faith. Explain why, based on evidence you can find, all of humanity will experience some unpleasantry (i.e. the discomfort of death, seeing Hellfire), even the pious.

2. It may be difficult for a person to accurately determine who are the good people and the evil people, and we are all togther living on earth. On the Day of Judgement everyone will be split into groups. What might you do to ensure that you are with those who are good?

3. Allah's personification of the earth may make one think of the similarities between the female human and the earth. Compare and contrast.

Extension Exercise – 8

Earthquakes

When Allah forewarns us about the occurrences of the end of the earth and the Day of Judgment, we should make every effort to connect with the warning such that it will have a maximized effect on our hearts, minds and actions. To this end, you will explore the phenomenon of earthquakes.
In your short essay you will:

- Define, in descriptive terms, an earthquake

- Find articles and interviews that tell of the experiences of earthquake survivors

- Identify earthquake safety measures, and reflect on the fact they will be ineffective on that day

- Identify countries that have the most earthquakes from a reputable source (i.e, World Almanac), and reflect on the fact that on that day, the entire earth will throw up her burdens due to the severe convulsions.

- Imagine if, as you are reading this, the Great Calamity began. What would you do, think, or feel?

Suratul Bayyinah

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنفَكِّينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ

1. Those who disbelieve from among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and among the mushrikun, were not going to leave (their disbelief) until there came to them clear evidence.

رَسُولٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً

2. A Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) from Allah, reciting (the Qur'an) purified pages (purified from Al-Batil (falsehood, etc.)).

فِيهَا كُتُبٌ قَيِّمَةٌ

3. Wherein are correct and straight laws from Allah.

وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ

4. And the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) differed not until after there came to them clear evidence. (i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and whatever was revealed to him).

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاء وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ

5. And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salat (iqamatas- Salat) and give Zakat: and that is the right religion.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُوْلَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ

6. Verily those who disbelieve (in the religion of Islam, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) from among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and the mushrikun will abide in the Fire of Hell. They are the worst of creatures.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ

7. Verily, those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah, and in His Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) including all obligations ordered by Islam) and do righteous good deeds, they are the best of creatures.

جَزَاؤُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

8. Their reward with their Lord is 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (Gardens of Eternity), underneath which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever, Allah will be pleased with them, and they with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord.

⮠ The Backdrop

This is a Makkan surah of Madani style. The People of the Book were awaiting a Prophet; it is clear from their scriptures that the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was this Prophet

In Suratul Baqarah, verse 89, Allah refers to this:
وَلَمَّا جَاءهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُواْ مِن قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَلَمَّا جَاءهُم مَّا عَرَفُواْ كَفَرُواْ بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّه عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ

And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them [the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for coming of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the Curse of Allah be on the disbelievers.

☑ Word-for-Word

فَك Fakk (verse 1) – undo, untie
كُتُبٌ Kutub (verse 3) – plural for books; Qur'an is called this because it joins the revelations that came before
حُنَفَاء Hunafaa' (verse 5) – to desist from the crooked path and go straight
عَدْن 'Adn (verse 8) – a place of residence

€Notable Points

The position of Ahl Al-Kitaab regarding the Prophet

The Christians, Jews and Polytheists would not untie themselves from Disbelief until their came to them clear evidence. The Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) came to them reciting the Quran, which is purified and free from falsehood. It contains the laws of Allah.

They did not differ until after there came to them clear evidence.

> This (verse 4) is an extreme revilement of the evil and wretched choice they made to disbelieve. They divided and divided such that they are now many sects and denominations. They are not one group.

Only after the realization of the truth did they reject the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Many of them were simply jealous because he was an Arab.

> In all aspects of life, purify your intentions.

Once the People of the Book have been exposed to Islam and come to know the truth, they are Kuffar (should they continue practicing their religion). If they have heard the truth and disobeyed then they are not exempt from the punishments of the Disbelievers.

They were only commanded to worship Allah (azw), and worship Him alone. To perform the Salat (prayer), give Zakat (charity). That is the right religion (Islam).

The end of the losers, whether Ahl Al-Kitaab or Mushrikeen

Truly, those who disbelieve are the most evil and wretched of creation. Nothing is more evil because they chose to reject the truth. They will abide in the fire of Hell.

Cross Reference:
Suratul Anfaal verse 55:

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللّهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَهُمْ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Verily, the worst of moving (living) creatures before Allah are those who disbelieve, - so they shall not believe.

In verse 6, Allah speaks of those who disbelieve amongst the Christians and Jews using an action verb. He uses the noun form to refer to the Polytheists. Perhaps this is because they People of the Book, who have rejected the truth, are worse than the Polytheists who were never guided.

All of the People of the Book are not the same. "A group of them" is used, making it clear that some are worse than others.

The end of the Victors, the people of Imaan

Truly, those who believe in the Oneness of Allah they are the best of creation. Their reward with their Lord is a residence in Paradise, under which rivers flow. They will live there forever. Allah will be pleased with them, and they with Him. That is for the one who fears his Lord.

Gems to Remember

- The Muslims should not divide and label ourselves other than "Muslim". Those of us who do this (separate and divide) are following the path of the Jews and Christians. Allah knows best.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Bayinnah

1. In Suratul Bayinnah verse 4, what is the "clear evidence" that came to them? In what ways have the People of the Book differed, and made schisms?

2. According to verse 5 in Suratul Bayinnah, what are the three major principles and/or obligations that must be observed when following "the right religion?"

3. One of Allah's Mercies is hidden (from most, except for those who reflect) in Suratul Bayinnah). Reflect on verses 6 and 8, compare and contrast them, to identify the Mercy in what is discussed.

Suratul Nasr a.k.a. Al-Bishaarah (the good news) a.k.a. At-Tawdee' (the Farewell)

إِذَا جَاء نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ

1. When comes the Help of Allah (to you, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah),

وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا

2. And you see that the people enter Allah's religion (Islam) in crowds,

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا

3. So glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives.

The Backdrop

This was the last complete surah revealed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). The surah brought the Believers hope and news of a great victory. After it was revealed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) spoke to the congregation of Muslims informing them that a servant had been given a choice between the dunya (this worldly life) and what was with Allah. Once it was became apparent that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was speaking of himself and his choice to die soon, Abu Bakr (radi Allahu 'anhu) began to cry and cry. Meanwhile, others remained confused and perplexed.

☑ Word-for-Word

أَفْوَاج Afwaaj (verse 2) – waves, crowds

تَوَّابً Tawwaabah (verse 3) – continues to forgive

€Notable Points

The victory

When the Help of Allah comes to you O Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) against your enemies, Makkah is opened (conquered).

Allah is foretelling and giving the blessed news of accomplishment and victory to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). It is a promise by Allah. So here the "if" is translated as "when" because it will certainly come true.

How should we react?

When you see the people entering Islam is crowds, glorify the praises of your Lord and ask for His Forgiveness. Truly, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives (continually).

Gems to Remember

- When we attain victory and success from Allah, it is not the time to become lax and lazy in worship. We should remember Allah more and glorify Him, while consistently asking for forgiveness of Him.

Personal Reflections

Quiz: Suratul Nasr

1. In verse 2 of Suratul Nasr, Allah speaks of people entering Islam in large groups. There are also statements of the Salaf, which confirm that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said "the people will enter Islam in crowds, but would soon leave it." Answer the following questions:

   I can contribute to large numbers of people accepting Islam by:

   I can try to prevent people leaving Islam by:

2. Throughout the Qur'an Allah speaks of praising and seeking forgiveness together. How did the best example for us, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) do both?

3. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his companions were presecuted and rejected greatly. Allah's help came to them through permission to migrate to a hospitable place and the acceptance of Islam by virtually the entire peninsula.

   Is there something in your life for which you are awaiting the Help and Victory of Allah? List ways in which you will know that it has arrived.